

# Vermont Immunization Registry – A Go-To Source for Flu Shot Data

It's long been the standard resource for assessing childhood immunizations. But did you know the Vermont Immunization Registry can be helpful in assessing whether your patient has received a flu shot this season?

The Registry is an important source of information for providers and long-term care facilities who are not sure if a patient had a flu shot during a hospital stay, from a pharmacy, or from another provider. More and more, those are being reported to the Registry. In fact, all Vermont hospitals except the Veterans Administration send immunizations to the Registry. Most pharmacies also report to the Registry – most often using a monthly batch process, so the records are added within 30 days of administration. Between August 1, 2017 and July 30, 2018, 230,929 flu shots were given and added to the Registry.

Figure 1

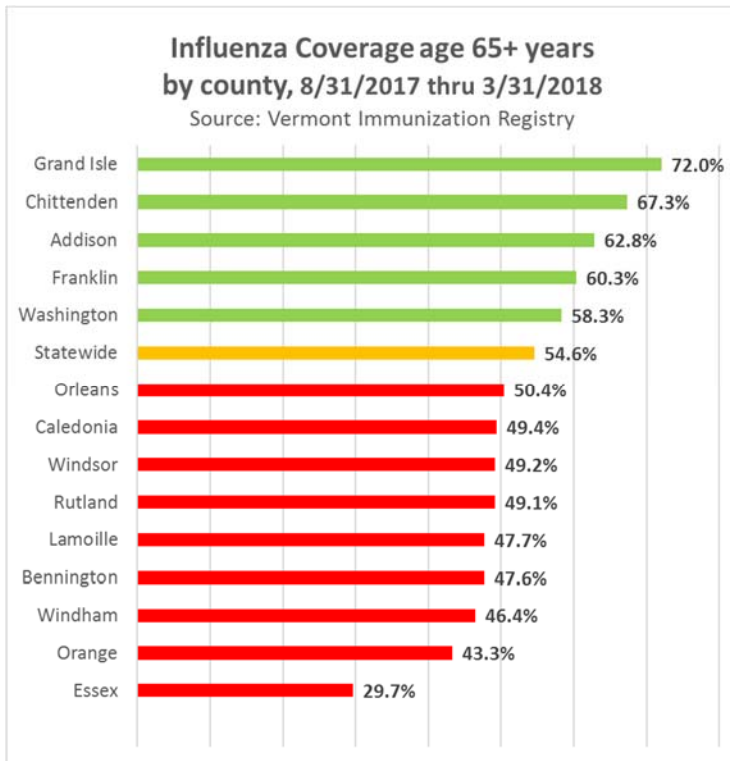
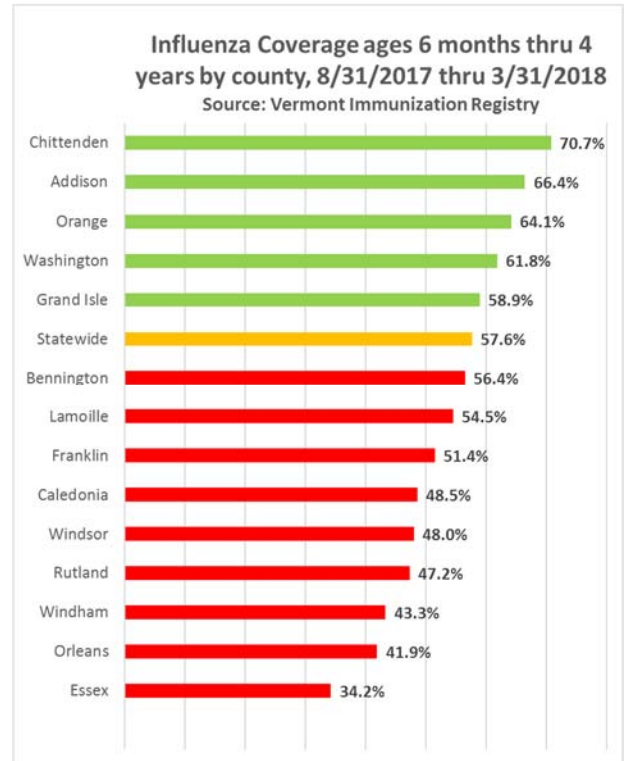


Figure 2



This information is also useful for assessing flu shot uptake in specific age groups by county. Figure 1 shows the percent of Vermonters age 65 years and older who received a flu shot this season. Nearly 55% of Vermonters in that age group were immunized, but there is wide variation by county. Figure 2 shows the percent of children 6 months of age through 4 years who received a flu shot, broken down by county. Nearly 58% of these were immunized state wide. Clearly, the more rural parts of the state have lower influenza coverage – and the Immunization Program will focus on outreach to these areas to improve protection.

While Registry data regarding influenza is informative and clearly demonstrates areas of need, we recognize three areas where we need to improve. Many Vermonters receive flu shots at employee health clinics, and these are not always reported to the Immunization Registry, despite a state law requires anyone administering a vaccine in Vermont to submit it to the Registry. Second, not all pharmacies report their data to the Registry; hampering providers ability to determine immunizations needed for some adults. Also, we have yet to connect the Veteran's Administration Hospital to the Registry, and we recognize they are also an important source of immunizations. We are focusing on getting data from both these sources for next flu season.