

## Flu Vaccine Coverage Drops Nationwide and in Vermont

Based on data reported by CDC, the percent of Vermonters six months and older that received a flu shot last season dropped almost 4 percentage points from the previous year, falling to 44%. A similar drop was seen for New England overall and for the United States. Coverage in Vermont remains about 4 percentage points below overall New England coverage. Below, we describe these findings in more detail. Coverage estimates are based on data collected through the NIS-Flu survey (children and teens) and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (adults).

### COVERAGE ESTIMATES FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS

#### NATIONAL FINDINGS

Coverage for children 6 months-17 years was 58%, a drop of about one percentage point from the previous year. Among the youngest children (6 months-4 years), there was a 2-percentage point decrease in coverage, to 68%.

#### KEY POINTS FOR VERMONT

For Vermont's children and teens, flu coverage remains well below coverage for New England. Among those 6 months to 17 years, coverage in Vermont remained stable at about 60%. However, among young children (6 months to 4 years), there was a drop of over 6 percentage points in coverage, to 69%. Though this was not a statistically significant change, it was concerning because point estimates over recent years had increased or remained stable. A drop in coverage for this age group would also be consistent with the drop observed in the US overall.

To improve our understanding of these findings, the Immunization Program is reviewing Immunization Registry data and ordering data. To address the persistent low flu coverage among Vermont children and teens, we are evaluating potential initiatives to improve access and convenience of flu vaccination for this age group.

## COVERAGE ESTIMATES FOR ADULTS

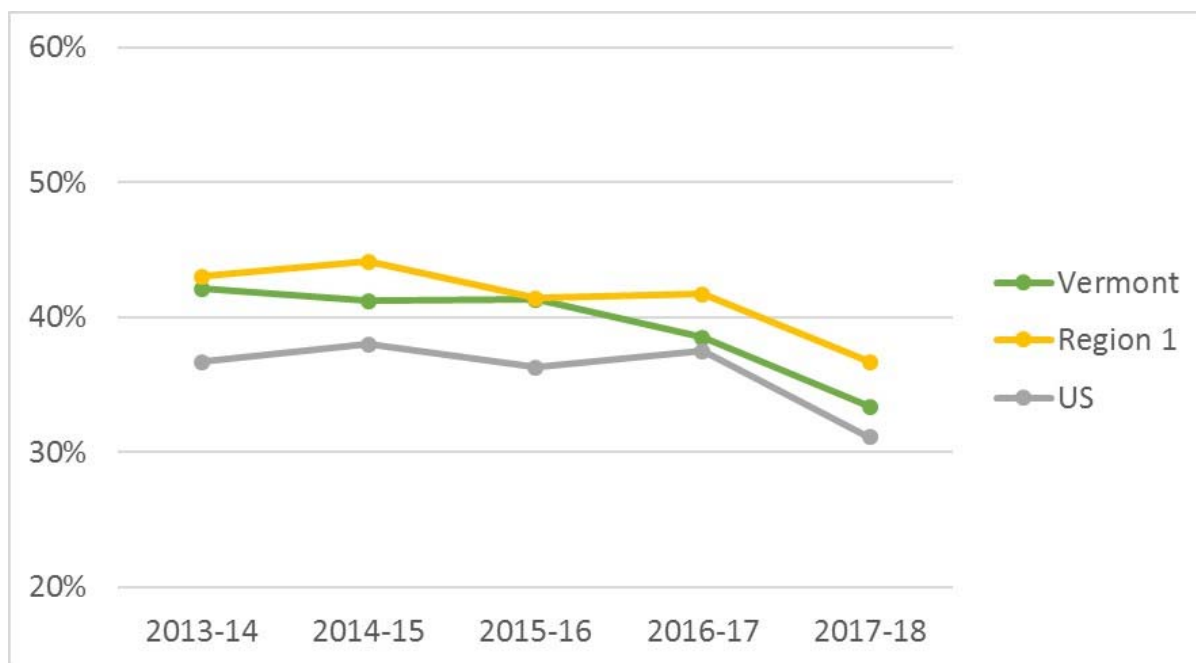
### NATIONAL FINDINGS

In the 2017-2018 season, estimated coverage among adults 18 and older fell 6 percentage points relative to the previous season, dropping to 37%. This was a statistically significant decrease and a major shift from the stability in coverage observed over recent years. The drop was observed across all adult age groups. Coverage was 31% for those 18-64 and 60% for those 65+.

### KEY POINTS FOR VERMONT

For Vermont adults 18-64, coverage dropped 5 percentage points relative to last season and has fallen nearly 10 percentage points over the past 5 years (Figure 1). Coverage for this age group was estimated at 33%, about 3 percentage points below the point estimate for New England overall. For younger adults, 18-49, coverage was only 27%, 10 percentage points below coverage from just 2 years ago. Among adults 65+, coverage was 61%, which was similar to the previous year and to overall New England coverage.

The Immunization Program is working to help address low flu coverage for adults. You can read about our plans to expand the VFA program to include flu vaccine for adults 19-64 below.



Adult Influenza Vaccination Coverage in Vermont, New England (Region 1), and the United States, Ages 18-64 Years