

# Pharmacies - Data Brief

## Vermont Immunization Registry

### Background

The role of pharmacies in the health care system has evolved over time. No longer simply a marketplace for medications, they often offer vaccinations, which makes them a key player in increasing access to vaccines for adults in Vermont. Laws vary from state to state as to the patient age at which pharmacies may administer vaccines. In Vermont, a pharmacist may administer vaccine to patients 18 years and older<sup>1</sup>.

### Pharmacies and the Vermont Immunization Registry

Vermont law requires that all vaccines administered be entered into the Vermont Immunization Registry (IMR). In 2014, the IMR began receiving data from Vermont pharmacies. As of April 2019, 121 pharmacies (84%) were sending or entering immunization data into the IMR.

The table below shows the chain pharmacies in Vermont that report immunizations to the IMR. Most of these send a monthly file for import into the IMR. Many independent pharmacies also report, but most of these smaller sites directly data enter information into the system.

Pharmacy chain	Number of Locations
CVS	10
Hannaford	13
Kinney	22
Price Chopper	6
Rite Aid/Walgreens	40
Shaw's/Osco	5
Walmart	6

Figure 1

### Vaccines Provided by Pharmacies

Between April 1, 2018 and Mar 31, 2019, the IMR received record of 65,779 immunizations from pharmacies, and flu vaccines account for most of these. Pneumococcal, Tdap, and Zoster vaccines are also common. Figure 2 below considers all immunizations in each of the specific series added from all sources, and the percent that came directly from pharmacies. In the past year, almost a third of all Zoster doses added to the IMR came directly from pharmacies.

**Adult Vaccines reported to IMR by Source Apr 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 thru Mar 31, 2019**

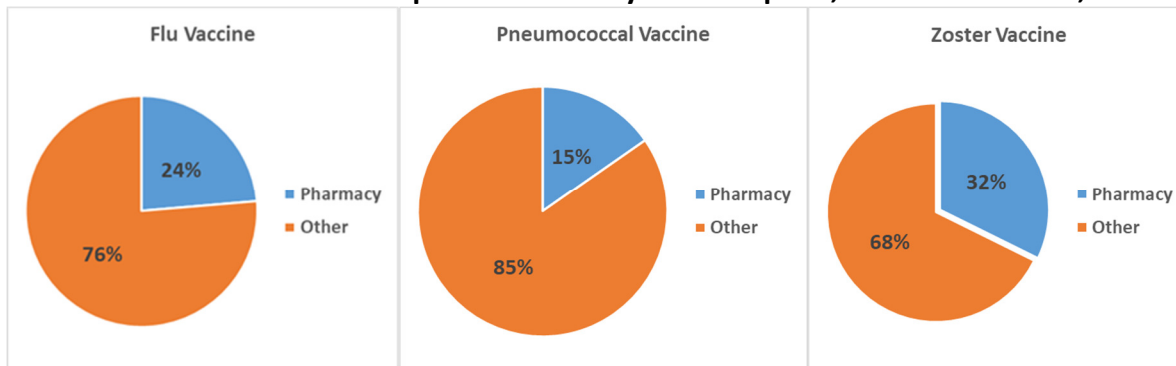


Figure 2

### Vaccines Imported from or Added by Pharmacies\*

April 1, 2017 through March 31, 2018

Ages 18-49	Count	Percent	Ages 50-64	Count	Percent	Ages 65+	Count	Percent
Influenza	12,533	81.9%	Influenza	11,379	84.7%	Influenza	16,005	76.3%
Pneumococcal	199	1.3%	Pneumococcal	523	3.9%	Pneumococcal	3,766	18.0%
TdaP	1,297	8.5%	TdaP	576	4.3%	TdaP	490	2.3%
Zoster (Shingles)	3	0.0%	Zoster (Shingles)	568	4.2%	Zoster (Shingles)	435	2.1%
Other	1,273	8.3%	Other	388	2.9%	Other	267	1.3%
<i>Total</i>	<i>15,305</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>13,434</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>20,963</i>	<i>100%</i>

April 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019

Ages 18-49	Count	Percent	Ages 50-64	Count	Percent	Ages 65+	Count	Percent
Influenza	15,227	83.6%	Influenza	13,240	72.9%	Influenza	18,096	61.5%
Pneumococcal	204	1.1%	Pneumococcal	519	2.9%	Pneumococcal	3,008	10.2%
TdaP	1,355	7.4%	TdaP	618	3.4%	TdaP	641	2.2%
Zoster (Shingles)	9	0.0%	Zoster (Shingles)	3,323	18.3%	Zoster (Shingles)	7,240	24.6%
Other	1,418	7.8%	Other	459	2.5%	Other	422	1.4%
<i>Total</i>	<i>18,213</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>18,159</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>29,407</i>	<i>100%</i>

Figure 3

Vaccines in the “other” category include Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, HPV, MMR, meningococcal, polio, and varicella. Check with your local pharmacy about vaccines available.

### The Impact of Pharmacies

The actual number of vaccines administered by pharmacies may be considerably higher than those in Figure 3. Most primary care providers and hospitals report immunizations their patients receive from pharmacies directly to the IMR through their electronic health records. The chain pharmacies submit their data via a monthly file, so by the time the IMR receives their file, a good portion of it is already in the system.

Between April 1, 2018 and March 31, 2019, 111,316 doses of vaccine to persons aged 65 years and above were administered and logged in the IMR. Pharmacies are providing a significant measure of the vaccine administered to the older population. It’s also clear that the overall number of immunizations administered at pharmacies is increasing. Some pharmacies are contracting with worksite flu clinics, too, which means that information – often challenging for the IMR to get, since organizations conducting flu clinics can be engaged from out of state and may not be aware of the requirement to report immunizations -- flows to the IMR as well.

### Going Forward

Increasing adult vaccination rates is a public health goal<sup>2</sup>, and pharmacies can be an important partner in achieving this. When a person receives an immunization at a pharmacy, a hospital, or another provider office, the IMR is a consolidated source of immunization history that any Vermont health care provider – including licensed pharmacists and pharmacy techs can access. Over 150 pharmacists and pharmacy tech have access to IMR records, and we continue to enroll new users and encourage IMR use in this important user group.

*For more information, please contact Bridget Ahrens, Immunization Registry Manager, (802) 951-4094.*

<sup>1</sup> Administrative Rules of the Board of Pharmacy,

<https://www.sec.state.vt.us/media/702345/5-RX-Rules-2015-Final-Adopted-August-24-2015.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Immunization and Infectious Disease Performance Dashboard, [http://healthvermont.gov/hv2020/dashboard/imm\\_infectious.aspx](http://healthvermont.gov/hv2020/dashboard/imm_infectious.aspx)