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# Vaccination Checklist for Community Pharmacists

**Understand what your state allows and requires.** There are differences in state rules on several variables, from vaccine type to patient age, so you'll need to investigate the details specific to where you live.

To see rules for your state, you can use this resource from the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA) and the American Pharmacy Association (APhA), which was updated July 2021: [naspa.us/resource/pharmacist-authority-to-immunize/](https://naspa.us/resource/pharmacist-authority-to-immunize/).

**Get certified.** Almost all states require pharmacists to be certified in vaccine delivery.

Some require CE hours specific to vaccination to ensure professional development and for license renewal. Just one source for this training is here: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/youcalltheshots.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/youcalltheshots.html). A free 1-hour refresher course is here: [www2.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/vaxadmin/va/index.html](https://www2.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/vaxadmin/va/index.html).

**Find a vaccine supplier.** Decide which vaccines you plan to offer and where you will buy them.

This resource from the Immunization Action Coalition lists vaccine manufacturers, the products they sell, and contact information for ordering, including telephone number: [www.immunize.org/resources/manufact\\_vax.asp](https://www.immunize.org/resources/manufact_vax.asp). For information specific to influenza vaccines, start with the Influenza Vaccine Availability Tracking System (IVATS) at [www.izsubmitpartners.org/ivats/](https://www.izsubmitpartners.org/ivats/).

**Make plans for storage.** Proper vaccine storage and handling play critical roles in effectiveness.

Vaccines that aren't kept within recommended storage temperatures may lose their protective potency. Proper storage and handling begin with an effective vaccine cold chain, a temperature-controlled supply chain that includes all vaccine-related equipment and procedures. Find useful guidance here: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/storage/toolkit/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/storage/toolkit/index.html).



**Figure out workflow.** Walk through each step of the process to make sure you've considered all the logistics, from scheduling patients to where you'll administer the shots.

Are you set up to take appointments for vaccinations? How will you handle walk-ins? Remember that giving the shot is probably the quickest part. Someone has to complete medical history and consent forms, verify insurance benefits, copy health insurance and identification cards, bill for services, handle payments, and provide patients the legally required vaccine information statement (VIS) (more here: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/index.html)). This brings us to the checklist's next step on staff responsibilities.



**Decide staff roles.** Remember how important pharmacy technicians can be in the non-clinical work necessary to support vaccine administration.

See this resource for a series of interactive online trainings on how technicians can support pharmacy-based immunization services: [www.pharmacist.com/Education/Certificate-Training-Programs/Technician-Immunizations](http://www.pharmacist.com/Education/Certificate-Training-Programs/Technician-Immunizations). Their roles can include increasing awareness of immunization services through communication with patients and other members of the healthcare team, collecting patient information, vaccine preparation, administration documentation, billing and insurance processing, organizing vaccine clinics, managing vaccine inventory and supplies, ordering new vaccines and supplies when needed, and ensuring vaccines are stored and handled correctly.



**Be ready to do the necessary reporting.** Administered vaccines should be documented in your local Immunization Information System (IIS).

Find your state registry here: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/iis/contacts-locate-records.html#state](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/iis/contacts-locate-records.html#state). You can also use IIS to look up a patient's vaccination history. Automated reporting of patient immunization data to your IIS, available within QS/1's [NRx® software](#), eliminates manual data entry and ensures compliance with evolving registry requirements. It's also best practice to notify a patient's healthcare provider of any vaccinations you administer, and you can find standard notification forms online if desired.



**Qualify for reimbursements.** Set up to submit vaccination services for reimbursement through Medicare or third-party payers.

Reimbursements can be complex, without doubt – but remember that as an independent pharmacist, you are already navigating complicated reimbursement systems. While vaccines are often covered under prescription drug benefits, some of the major vaccines like flu are covered under the medical benefit. If you're serving Medicare patients, that requires becoming a certified Medicare Part B provider. A good overview of the process is here: [www.pharmacytimes.com/publications/supplements/2019/June2019/navigating-the-world-of-vaccine-billing](http://www.pharmacytimes.com/publications/supplements/2019/June2019/navigating-the-world-of-vaccine-billing).



**Market your vaccination services.** Make sure the community knows they can receive immunizations at your pharmacy.

First, speak to your existing pharmacy patients using outside signage, postings inside the store, bag stuffers, etc. Also, think about calls, letters, or emails to a specific demographic - families with children, for example. You should also market the pharmacy's immunization services to local medical providers and be sure to register at [vaccinefinder.org](https://vaccinefinder.org). To talk to patients about their concerns, consider this 2-page printable resource from the CDC titled "Ensuring the Safety of Vaccines in the United States": [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/conversations/ensuring-safe-vaccines.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/conversations/ensuring-safe-vaccines.html).

Find many additional resources on pharmacy immunizations at [ncpa.org/no-excuses-vaccination-toolkit#operations](https://ncpa.org/no-excuses-vaccination-toolkit#operations).



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