



March 4, 2023

Dear Maryland Health Providers,

Nationally, the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is estimated to cause 36,000 new cases of cancer each year.¹

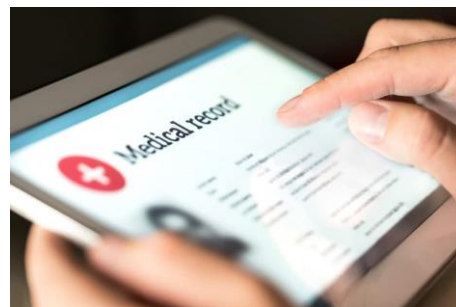
We have an opportunity to eradicate HPV-associated cancers, and yet too many people are not getting a safe and effective vaccine that prevents six different cancers associated with the human papillomavirus (HPV) to include oral pharyngeal and cervical cancer. The HPV vaccine is approved for ages **9 years through 45 years for ALL GENDERS**. The American Cancer Society and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommend vaccination at age 9, and some of Maryland's biggest advocates are leading this charge, including the Maryland chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Maryland Department of Health (MDH), the University of Maryland, and Johns Hopkins.

In Maryland, approximately 70.2% of boys and 73.8% of girls under age 18 are fully vaccinated against HPV-associated cancers.² Nationally, approximately 27% of men and 53.6% of women between the ages of 18–26 are vaccinated.³ In rural communities, HPV vaccination rates are low, yet incidence and mortality rates of HPV-associated cancers are high.⁴

We need to address the public health issue of vaccination of Maryland's adolescents and adults against HPV and Maryland has partnered with Delaware, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C. and West Virginia in a multi-state Call-to-Action to increase HPV vaccination through strong and consistent provider recommendations and initiation of the HPV vaccination at age 9.

CALL TO ACTION:

- Set your **electronic health record** and pharmacy notifications from age 9 years through 45 years for men and women. Starting at age 9 has been shown to increase vaccine completion by 22 times.⁵
- Make a **strong recommendation for HPV vaccines** for all patients age 9 years through 45 years. Data shows that your recommendation may improve vaccinations by up to 5



¹ National Cancer Institute. HPV and Cancer. <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/infectious-agents/hpv-and-cancer>.

² <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-managers/coverage/teenvaxview/data-reports/index.html>

³ McElfish PA, Narcisse MR, Felix HC, Cascante DC, Nagarsheth N, Teeter B, Faramawi MF. Race, Nativity, and Sex Disparities in Human Papillomavirus Vaccination among Young Adults in the USA. *J Racial Ethn Health Disparities*. 2021 Oct;8(5):1260-1266. doi: 10.1007/s40615-020-00886-5. Epub 2020 Oct 8. PMID: 33033889; PMCID: PMC9753349.

⁴ Brandt HM, Vanderpool RC, Pilar M, Zubizarreta M, Stradtman LR. A narrative review of HPV vaccination interventions in rural U.S. communities. *Prev Med*. 2021 Apr;145:106407. doi: 10.1016/j.ympmed.2020.106407. Epub 2021 Jan 1. PMID: 33388323.

⁵ O'Leary ST. Why the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends initiating HPV vaccine at age 9. *Hum Vaccin Immunother*. 2022 Nov 30;18(6):2146434. doi: 10.1080/21645515.2022.2146434. Epub 2022 Nov 20. PMID: 36404635; PMCID: PMC9746363.



times.⁶ For adults age 26 years through 45 years, engage in shared decision making to help determine the benefits of vaccination. Vaccination recommendation should be made in all healthcare settings to include acute, non-acute, GYN, dental and pharmacy locations.

- Encourage **same day vaccination** in your facility.
- **Leverage your local pharmacy** especially in **ADULTS** to deliver vaccinations. If you are not able to stock vaccine at your facility, e-prescribe/prescribe to the pharmacy. The prescription will activate pharmacy reminder systems which will improve compliance.
- Review your patients who have not completed their 2 or 3 dose series and **proactively recall patients** to your facility or e-prescribe to your local pharmacy to complete the series.
- **Check adult patients** through age 45 to ensure they have completed their HPV series.
- Identify an **immunization champion** at your facility.
- Implement **standing orders** which can be found at [Vaccine Standing Orders for Healthcare Providers \(immunize.org\)](http://Vaccine Standing Orders for Healthcare Providers (immunize.org)).

**IF YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO STOCK
THE HPV VACCINE AT YOUR
FACILITY, PRESCRIBE TO THE
PHARMACY.**

The MDH, in conjunction with the Vaccines for Children Program, provides free HPV vaccines for all kids enrolled in Maryland Medicaid or who have no insurance. The HPV vaccine is a covered benefit for insurances through age 26. Over 95% of insurance cover ages 26 years through 45 years with share decision making which can be documented with an e-prescription / prescription.

Please review the resources and links at the end of the letter specifically highlighting:

- MDH HPV Website, featuring various resources
- A no-cost MOC project- HPV: Don't Wait. Vaccinate! Increasing First Dose HPV Vaccine for Teens.
- American Academy of Pediatrics age HPV age 9 toolkit and vaccination site.
- Why the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends initiating HPV vaccine at age 9

Thank you for all that you do to improve the health of your patients and for your participation in this important effort to prevent cancer by increasing the uptake of the HPV vaccination in Maryland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Niharika Khanna MD".

Niharika Khanna, MD, MBBS, DGO
Chair
Maryland Cancer Collaborative

⁶ Ylitalo KR, Lee H, Mehta NK. Health care provider recommendation, human papillomavirus vaccination, and race/ethnicity in the US National Immunization Survey. Am J Public Health. 2013 Jan;103(1):164-9. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2011.300600. Epub 2012 Jun 14. PMID: 22698055; PMCID: PMC3518336.



Resources

Maryland Department of Health Resources

- Maryland Department of Health [HPV vaccination webpage](#)
- Register for the no-cost MOC project- HPV: Don't Wait. Vaccinate! Increasing First Dose HPV Vaccine for Teens
(https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/cancer/Documents/HPV%20Dont%20Wait%20Vaccinate%20Registration%20Flyer_local%20promotion%20update.pdf)

American Academy of Pediatrics Resources

- American Academy of Pediatrics webpage featuring various tools and resources
(<https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/campaigns-and-toolkits/human-papillomavirus-hpv>)
- American Academy of Pediatrics HPV vaccination patient care webpage
(<https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/immunizations/human-papillomavirus-vaccines/>)
- [Full article: Why the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends initiating HPV vaccine at age 9 \(tandfonline.com\)](#)

National HPV Roundtable Clinical and Health System Action Guides

Clinical Guides

- Physicians, Physician Assistants & Nurse Practitioners
<http://hpvroundtable.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/PROVIDERS-Action-Guide-WEB.pdf>
- Nurses & Medical Assistants
<http://hpvroundtable.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/RNMA-Action-Guide-WEB.pdf>
- Dentists & Hygienists
<http://hpvroundtable.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/DENTAL-Action-Guide-WEB.pdf>
- Office Administrative Staff Teams
<http://hpvroundtable.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/OFFICE-TEAMS-Action-Guide-WEB.pdf>

Systems Guides

- Small Private Practices
<http://hpvroundtable.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/SMALL-PRACTICES-Action-Guide-WEB.pdf>
- Large Health Systems
<http://hpvroundtable.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/LARGE-SYSTEMS-Action-Guide-WEB.pdf>