

## **Consumer access to immunization information systems: Evaluation of a 5-state pilot project**

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Abstract

**Background:** Maintaining documentation of a family member's vaccination history is one way to ensure that individuals are accurately informed of their vaccination status. To help increase patients' access to health information in order to enable action, a 5-state pilot project was implemented to allow consumers access to their immunization information stored in their state Immunization Information System (IIS) via a consumer access portal.

**Purpose:** To evaluate the implementation of the consumer access pilot project and identify the key factors for successful implementation.

**Methods:** A mixed methods study design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods, was used for this project. The study collected information from the three stakeholders engaged in the implementation of the consumer access portal: the state immunization program (via key informant interviews), the healthcare provider (via key informant interviews and an online survey), and the consumer (via an online survey).

**Results:** Although stakeholders reported the consumer portal was easy to learn and use, completion of consumer registration was low. Organizational factors contributing to the low uptake was the lack of dedicated staff among the immunization programs to recruit and train providers as well as provide adequate follow-up. Human factors that contributed to low use included many providers forgetting to promote the portal to their patients along with many consumers forgetting to complete the final steps to activate their account. While the state immunization programs and providers saw the potential for the portal to empower consumers to make decisions about their health, many felt it was too early in the project to see real benefits. However, among consumers who learned that a vaccine was needed, half took action by calling their healthcare provider to learn more or schedule a visit.

**Conclusion:** A consumer access portal linking consumers to their immunization information stored in their state IIS was moderately successful. As the project continues for another year, adjusting the registration process to allow the consumer to complete all the steps online in one session has the potential to increase the number of users, reduce the burden on the state immunization program and providers and allow for statewide promotion of the portal.