

Background and Objective

BACKGROUND

There is no federal program similar to the Vaccines for Children Program to cover the cost of vaccines for uninsured and underinsured adults. In the past, Minnesota has provided limited vaccines for select adult populations to public clinics but the amount of vaccine available and who was eligible was inconsistent, causing confusion for providers and the public. As a result, in November 2010, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) created the Uninsured and Underinsured Adult Vaccine (UUAV) program. The program was designed to create consistency and provide vaccine to clinics who serve this population. The program will run for a three year period, January 2011 to December 2013.

OBJECTIVE

- To provide vaccine at no cost for adults who lack health insurance or who have insurance that does not cover immunizations.

Selection Process

- Published a request for proposals from organizations that regularly serve uninsured and underinsured adults.
- Received over 160 proposals requesting more than \$10 million worth of vaccine.
- Selected clinics based on several criteria including:
 - Duration of their adult immunization program.
 - Percentage of uninsured and underinsured adult patients served.
 - Planned outreach.
 - Statewide geographic representation.

Results

- 109 organizations were selected consisting of:
 - Local Public Health
 - Community Health Centers
 - FQHCs/RHCs
 - Correctional Facilities
 - Tribal Health/IHS
 - Community Colleges
- Total of \$1.5 million in vaccine was awarded.
- Vaccines available included Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, HPV, MMR, PPV23, Td, Tdap, and Varicella.
- Awards were based on needs described in each proposal.
- Uptake was less than anticipated, \$897,000 in vaccine ordered in 2011.

Lessons Learned

- Providing free vaccine does not necessarily increase uptake.
- Education about the importance of adult immunization and the availability of the UUAV program is essential for both clinic staff and for patients.

Next Steps

- Enhance the UUAV Program through funding awarded to Minnesota from a Prevention and Public Health Funds grant.
- Conduct a survey to assess clinic needs, such as education for staff and patients and promotion of UUAV program.
- Create educational materials for clinics including web-based training on adult immunizations.
- Use social media to promote adult immunization and the UUAV program.

