

PROTECT YOUR PATIENTS DURING THE 2025-2026 RESPIRATORY ILLNESS SEASON

Dear Massachusetts Healthcare Provider,

The 2025–2026 respiratory illness season is underway, and you play a critical role in protecting Massachusetts communities. The [Massachusetts Vaccine Confidence Project \(MVCP\)](#) is asking for your assistance in promoting immunizations to reduce respiratory disease across the state.

As in recent seasons, COVID-19, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are expected to circulate at the same time, further straining our healthcare system and making it harder to provide the best care to patients. Your role in promoting respiratory immunizations is key to protecting patients and easing that burden.

Recent data as of July 3, 2025, show a decline in respiratory vaccine uptake: During the 2024–2025 season, 21% of Massachusetts residents were vaccinated against COVID-19 and 41% were vaccinated against influenza, both representing decreases from the previous season. These trends underscore the **urgent need for strong, consistent vaccine recommendations from trusted providers like you.**

COVID-19, influenza, pneumococcal, and RSV immunizations are available this fall and winter to help protect against serious respiratory illnesses. Immunization is crucial for those at higher risk. This includes young children, pregnant people, the immunocompromised, and older adults. Immunization remains one of the safest, most effective ways to prevent severe illness and hospitalization.

To support your critical role this season, we'd like to share tips and tools to help you promote respiratory disease vaccination with confidence:

- Give a strong vaccine recommendation after assessing your patient's immunization status. Be sure to discuss all recommended respiratory vaccines for the season. Review [vaccine information](#) for healthcare and public health professionals..

- Use motivational interviewing to support patients with questions or concerns. This patient-centered approach can help build trust and increase vaccine acceptance. Access a [free training on motivational interviewing](#) and earn CME-CEU-CPE credit upon completion.
- Implement standing orders to increase efficiency. They allow authorized healthcare personnel to assess immunization needs and administer vaccines without direct clinician involvement. Immunize.org provides [standing order templates](#) for most vaccines.
- Activate immunization [reminder/recall](#) through the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS) to identify and notify patients who are behind on immunizations (recall) or due soon (reminder). Check out the steps you can take to set up [reminder recall](#) for respiratory illness vaccines this season.
- Leverage local pharmacy partners to administer vaccinations. As a reminder, pharmacists in Massachusetts can administer vaccines to children 5 years and older.

Thank you for all you do to protect your patients and for supporting efforts to reduce respiratory illness in Massachusetts this season. We know the environment is challenging, but your vaccination efforts remain essential to protecting both individuals and the broader community.

We recognize that evolving federal guidance can be challenging, especially as providers navigate complex messaging and increasing disinformation. Nonetheless, your vaccination efforts remain essential to protecting both individuals and the broader Massachusetts community. Thank you for all you do to protect your patients and for supporting efforts to reduce respiratory illness in Massachusetts this season.

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