Pharmacy-Based Immunizations 2026

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American Association of Pharmacy Technicians™



Don’t get stuck in the past…
…. Pharmacy Based-Vaccinations

By the end of this presentation, you should be able to:

- Explain the pharmacy technician’s scope for administering vaccines in Nebraska.
- Describe changes in pharmacy-based vaccine administration
- List the steps to prepare for a successful vaccine administration patient encounter



American Association of Pharmacy Technicians™

Who am I?

- Associate Pharmacy Director – Charles Drew Health Center Pharmacy
- Long-term Care Pharmacist
- Informaticist - CyncHealth
- Second career pharmacist
- Confession time…



Patient-Centered Model of Care



Story time…

The pharmacist on duty had just agreed to immunize family friends for flu stopping by the pharmacy to pick up prescriptions. Three generations sat in the waiting area to get their flu shots.

Grandma, who hates needles and only ever gets FluMist®, Mom and her two kids ages 32 and 49 months have been placed into the room by the pharmacist. The vaccines are checked and ready and the pharmacist is called to the store's office and leaves the pharmacy, on the way handing you the baskets and yelling "Take care of these!" on the way out of the pharmacy.

That leaves two technicians behind the counter. Pharmacy technician A they have been at this company for about 11 months but have not had time to take any additional technician training beyond the technician certification. You, pharmacy technician B, who just started 3 weeks ago after completing your certification program including immunization and CPR work.



How did we get here?

- Thank Covid! (PREP Act)[1]
- Brought into the Nebraska Revised Statutes with LB227 (2023)
  - Neb Rev St 38-2891 lays out the 6 elements approved pharmacy-technician vaccination [2]
  - Neb Rev St 38-2890 lays out being a pharmacy technician [3]
- Contingent on the pharmacist being able to vaccinate
  - Rx or Protocol



Get to the good stuff! [2]

- Vaccines (the whole prescription) must be checked by a pharmacist
- Administration is limited to deltoid or subcutaneous arm injections (3 years or older)
- You are a certified pharmacy technician

- You have:
  - successfully completed a certificate in vaccine administration
  - a current CPR (basic life support) certification
  - the supervising pharmacist onsite



Remember this scenario?

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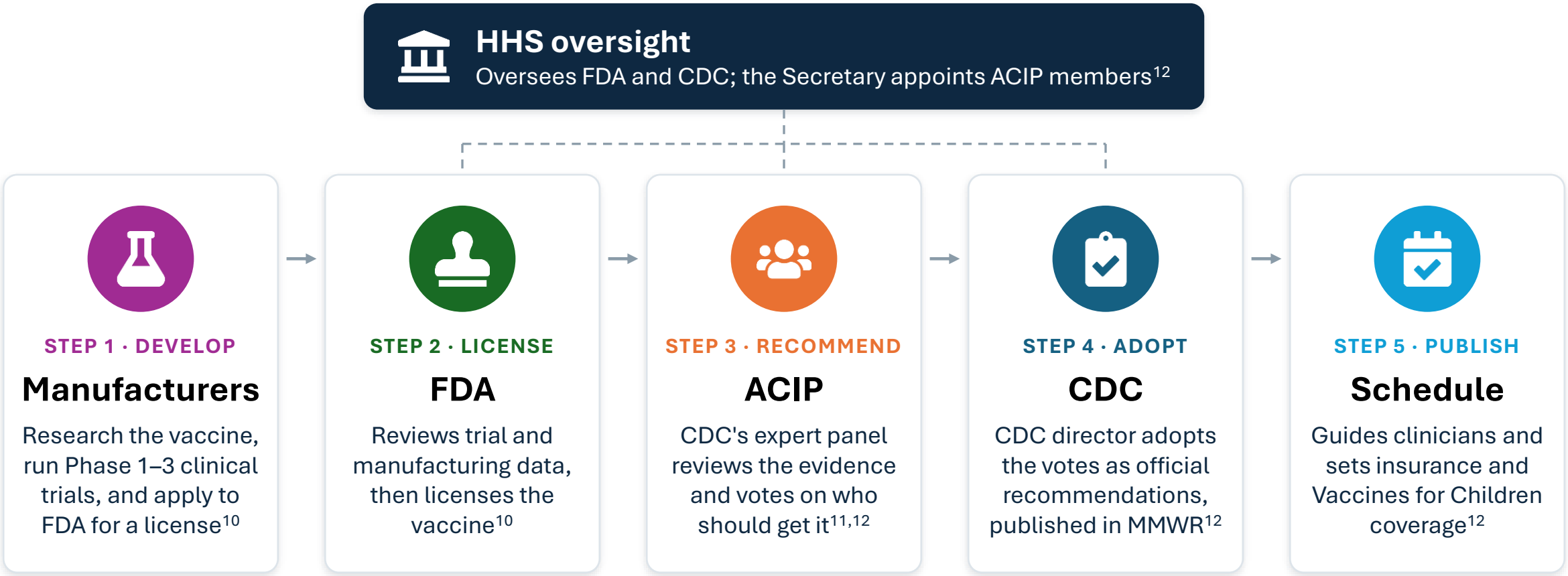
What has changed

- Learn the lingo
  - SCDM [4] -- Shared Decision Making
  - HHS – Department of Health and Human Services
  - FDA [5] – Food and Drug Administration
  - CDC [6] – Centers for Disease Control
  - ACIP [7] – Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices
  - AAP [8] – American Academy of Pediatrics
  - AAFP [9] – American Academy of Family Physicians



How Vaccines Are Approved and Scheduled



What's changed in 2026: In January, HHS released a revised childhood schedule, developed without an ACIP vote, that moved several vaccines to shared clinical decision-making.[13] In May, HHS re-established ACIP under a new charter.[12] Many states and medical groups now follow the American Academy of Pediatrics schedule.[13]

2026 Recommendatior

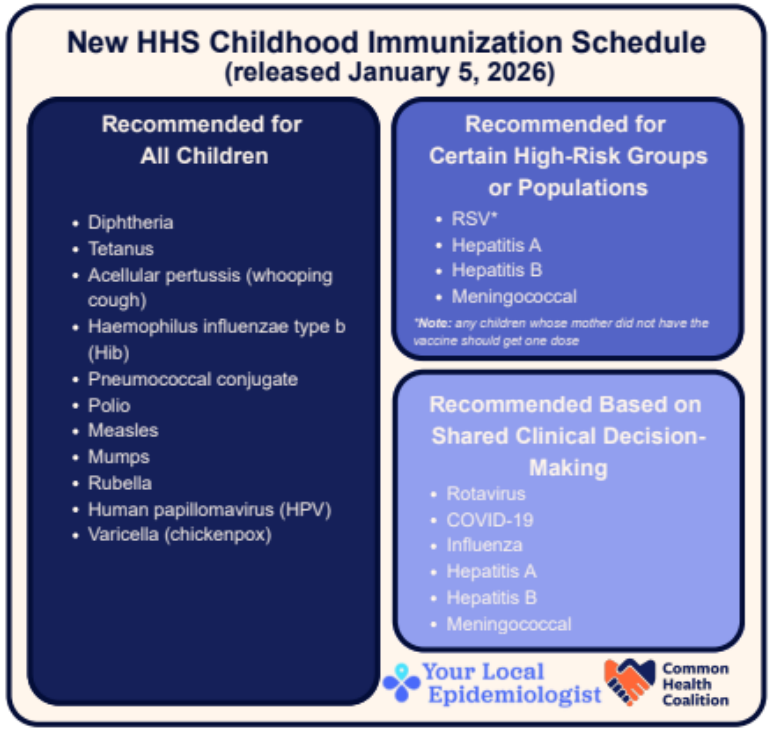
- Created three groups
  - All Children
  - High-Risk Groups or Populations
  - SCDM

- Flu & COVID-19 and 4 others moved to SCDM

The key elements of the change:

The CDC will now routinely recommend vaccines for 11 diseases. This also includes a change to HPV, moving from 2 doses to 1. The new CDC schedule is now explicitly organized into three categories (depicted in the figure to the right):

- Vaccines recommended for all children (narrowed compared to prior guidance)
- Vaccines recommended for certain high-risk groups
- Vaccines based on shared clinical decision-making (SCDM)



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**Screen shot from explainer [14]

Organization split and why this matters

- The CDC and professional medical societies have differing vaccination schedules.
- May lead to vaccines no longer covered under insurance
- Later than normal release of COVID-19 (from previous years)



Generalized process for Pharmacy-based vaccine administration

- Patient information collected (consent)
- Entering and Billing
- Filling
- Checking
- Ring-out
- Administration

From the CDC [15]

- Before – assessing, screening, patient education
- During – site, route, admin prep
- After – disposal, documentation, reporting



Administering the vaccine(s)

Giving the first vaccine or your 500th, comes down to the following items.

- Technician, know thyself
- Know your environment
- It didn’t happen if it isn’t documented
- Focus on the patient
- Be present in the moment



Technician, know thyself

- Think about your boundaries
- Create a personalized strategy you can repeat
- Discuss with staff your comfort levels
- Figure out the process that works for you



Know your environment

Whether you float or are at the same pharmacy “forever”, know where items are kept in the store. These should be reviewed before you start the vaccine process

- Gloves / bandages / needles / VIS forms / Sharps
- The supervising pharmacist
- Rescue plan
- Who’s calling for help



Document

Documentation includes more than just the lot and expiration date; you should also get in the habit of documenting:

- Site of administration
- Route
- Time
- Problems

Additionally, work with the pharmacist to create quick references and an external brain:

- Vaccine administration type (IM / SQ)
- Vaccine storage
- Needle length



Focus on the patient

- Talk with the patient to get a sense of their comfort level
  - Are they nervous?
  - Are they prepared?
- Is the area (environment) appropriate for the patient's clothing?
- Does anything feel or look out of place?



Be present in the moment

Distractions can lead to disaster [16, 17]

- Handle one patient at a time
- Know your plan tailored to this patient and the prescriptions
- Collect the items needed prior to starting your vaccine process

Are we making a difference? [18]

Flu Season	Estimated administrations
2020–21	47.7M
2021–22	40.5M
2022–23	41.5M
2023–24	37.7M
2024–25	37.8M
2025–26	36.4M

** Numbers based on IQVIA claims



Question 1

Which of these are not needed when preparing for and successfully administering a vaccine?

- Knowing the patient's general comfort level
- Knowing your abilities
- Knowing the pharmacist's comfort level
- Knowing where everything is prior to starting the vaccination



Question 1 - answer

Which of these are not needed when preparing for and successfully administering a vaccine?

- Knowing the patient's general comfort level
- Knowing your abilities
- **Knowing the pharmacist's comfort level**
- Knowing where everything is prior to starting the vaccination



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Question 2
Based on the scenario above

Who is available to administer the vaccination to the mother?

- Both pharmacy technicians
- Pharmacy Technician A
- Pharmacy Technician B
- Neither pharmacy technician



Question 2 - answer
Based on the scenario above

Who is available to administer the vaccination to the mother?

- Both pharmacy technicians
- Pharmacy Technician A
- Pharmacy Technician B
- **Neither pharmacy technician**

The pharmacist is not in the pharmacy.



Question 3 Based on the scenario above

If Grandma, Mom, and the younger child are each receiving one vaccine and a pharmacist is in the pharmacy, which of the following is most accurate about pharmacy technician B administering the flu vaccines for this family:

- You will be able to administer the vaccines to Grandma and Mom, only the child will need a pharmacist to administer the vaccine.
- You will be able to administer the vaccine only to Mom, the pharmacist will need to administer the other two vaccines.
- You will be able to administer the vaccine only to Grandma, the Mom and child will need the pharmacist to administer a vaccine.



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Question 4

You work for a company that has you move between several locations. Which of the following will help you comfortably vaccinate at any of the locations?

- Keeping copies of your CPR card and immunization certification available for pharmacists to review.
- Identifying where supplies and materials are at each location, and if needed, writing them down.
- Moving a patient from behind a privacy screen to a more secluded room while there is a rush in the pharmacy.
- All of the above.



Question 4 - answer

You work for a company that has you move between several locations. Which of the following will help you comfortably vaccinate at any of the locations?

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- Identifying where supplies and materials are at each location, and if needed, writing them down
- Moving a patient from behind a privacy screen to a more secluded room while there is a rush in the pharmacy
- **All of the above**



Question 5

Which group is directly responsible for creating the recommendations for vaccines?

- ACIP - Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices
- CDC – Centers for Disease Control
- FDA – Food and Drug Administration
- HHS – Department of Health and Human Services



Question 5 - answer

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Questions?

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