



SNAPSHOTS

IMMUNIZATION REGISTRY NEWS *from* AMERICAN IMMUNIZATION REGISTRY ASSOCIATION (AIRA)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Colleagues,

Fall is here, the weather is getting crisp, and we're rounding the corner toward the end of 2021. A lot has been accomplished by IIS programs across the country so far this year and I know firsthand how much work is still ahead of us. I'm so proud to be part of a community that has persevered in the face of adversity, and I know we'll come out stronger for it.

The recent AIRA 2021 National Meeting was such a great opportunity to come together and share these stories of perseverance. We got the chance to hear about lessons learned and how new processes and systems were implemented in order to plan for and roll out COVID-19 vaccine. This hard work, including laying out ongoing plans for future pandemic response, has been amazing and does not go unrecognized.

Speaking of the National Meeting, there's a great article in this edition of *SnapShots* that recaps the meeting, including how the virtual component was an opportunity for members of the IIS community to participate even if they were unable to travel. You'll also find an article from one of our National Meeting presenters in Oklahoma, as well as an article on how Massachusetts is using its IIS for COVID-19 response and helpful information from the Public Health Informatics Institute about IIS procurement.

I hope you have a few moments to read through all the wonderful articles in this edition of *SnapShots*. Thank you to everyone who took the time to write something for us.

Regards,

Dave McCormick

AIRA Board President

Director, Indiana Immunization Division

Indiana State Department of Health

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Welcome to *SnapShots*, the American Immunization Registry Association's newsletter about the progress, best practices, and accomplishments of immunization information systems (IIS) across the country. We invite you to share news about your IIS. Email us at info@immregistries.org with information about a successful programmatic or technical innovation, major accomplishment, or milestone that your IIS has reached.



AIRA2021: A SUCCESS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST!

After a year off that included so many challenges and ups and downs for all of us, AIRA was excited to host the IIS community at the AIRA 2021 National Meeting in Portland, Oregon, and virtually on August 3–5, 2021. In light of the ever-changing public health landscape due to the pandemic, this year’s meeting was a hybrid event with both in-person and virtual components.

The in-person event this year was similar to previous AIRA National Meetings. Our peers and partners came together to educate each other on the latest IIS best practices and brought the IIS discussion to a national stage. In-person attendees had the chance to reconnect and strengthen long-term partnerships, and attendees who are new to the IIS community were able to develop new relationships and gain professional education and training. Everyone learned from one another, regardless of years of experience in the field.

Some of the in-person sessions were live-streamed for virtual attendees, and there was a full, separate virtual agenda that included six breakout sessions. The turnout was incredible—468 total attendees! There were 187 in-person attendees, and 281 people attended virtually. Between in-person and virtual attendees, 50 of the 64 IIS jurisdictions (78%) were represented. Truly an incredible show of community and unity during a pandemic!

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Pictured: (l-r) Molly Howell, North Dakota Department of Health; Claire Hannan, Association of Immunization Managers; Michele Roberts, Washington State Department of Health; Kelly Moore, Immunization Action Coalition; Rebecca Coyle, AIRA; Mary Woinarowicz, North Dakota Department of Health



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AIRA2021: A SUCCESS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST!

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A Look Back

Keynote speaker Stacy Allison, the first woman to summit Mt. Everest, kicked off day one by inspiring attendees with her story and her ability to tie it back to workplaces. One of the most impactful plenary sessions was a COVID debrief, giving in-person attendees a chance to share their experiences and lessons learned from the ongoing COVID-19 vaccine response. We heard from many attendees that it was the first time they had a chance to talk to their peers in the IIS community about their experiences. AIRA Board President Dave McCormick summarized what was shared during the closing plenary session.

Awards and Recognition

In addition to the rich content provided by our presenters, AIRA recognized this year's award recipients in the following categories:

Consider It Done!

- Erin Corrigan, Oregon Health Authority
- Iris Cheng, New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene
- Kristin Smitha, Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services
- Nick Harrar, STChealth
- Walter Scull, South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control

Epi Rock Stars

- Jacqueline Logan, Tennessee Department of Health
- Melisse Chasse, Tennessee Department of Health

High Five

- Amit Popat, EPIC Systems Corporation
- Steve Murchie, Envision Technology Partners, Inc.
- Valentin Sostaric, Arizona Department of Health Services

Leadership

- Craig Newman, Altarum Institute
- Josh Hull, MCIR/Kunz Leigh & Associates
- Katie Cruz, New Mexico Department of Health
- Marie Hartel, Tennessee Department of Health

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AIRA2021: A SUCCESS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST!

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Prime Participation

- **Brad Course**, Envision Technology Partners, Inc.
- **Ethan Hawkins**, Denver Health and Hospitals Authority
- **Mary Woinarowicz**, North Dakota Department of Health
- **Stuart Weinberg**, Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Superstar

- **Anh Pham**, Texas Department of State Health Services
- **Annette Hobson**, Virgin Islands Department of Health
- **Dave McCormick**, Indiana Department of Health
- **Kevin Snow**, Envision Technology Partners, Inc.
- **Mike Bin**, Washington State Department of Health

Team High Five

- Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services
- New Mexico Department of Health
- New York State Department of Health
- Minnesota Department of Health

Volunteer Service Award

- **Miriam Muscoplat**, Minnesota Department of Health
- **Sydney Kuramoto**, Minnesota Department of Health
- **Tavio Pirocchi**, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment

A special, bittersweet recognition was given to Bill Brand from the Public Health Informatics Institute. Bill recently retired after working in the public health and IIS communities for well over 30 years. He has been a calming and extremely capable presence who was a pioneer of immunization registries back when they were still in the “idea” stage. Bill has been an IIS advocate who has formally worked in the IIS community and has served as an informal mentor to many of us. Thank you, Bill, for your service!

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AIRA2021: A SUCCESS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST!

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A Journey Along the Oregon Trail

Speaking of pioneers, the AIRA Game Show took in-person attendees through a journey along the Oregon Trail. Just like in the original game, contestants navigated many obstacles along the way, but AIRA's version incorporated a COVID twist. Hosts Eric Larson and Jo Turcotte helped contestants navigate such obstacles as Transport Rock, HL7 Ravine, CDS Mountains, and Fort Data Quality. Congratulations to the teams who made it to the end of the trail!



Pictured: Sammy Chao, PHII, (far left) is being guided by her teammate through “life boulders” along the Oregon Trail, such as finding toilet paper, kids interrupting Zoom calls, and last-minute data requests.

A Look Ahead

AIRA hasn't identified a location for the next National Meeting yet, and we know the pandemic is still causing a lot of uncertainty for all of us. We'll share our plans for the next AIRA National Meeting as soon as we have them. In the meantime, we will continue to connect virtually with all of you as much as we can. And we look forward to connecting with you in person again soon!

- Submitted by Lonnie Peterson, AIRA



MASSACHUSETTS USES ITS IIS FOR A SUCCESSFUL COVID-19 VACCINE RESPONSE

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts recently implemented a new commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) IIS. We want to highlight the work the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has been able to achieve during COVID-19 using the IIS.

The Department of Public Health has been able to respond quickly and effectively to meet COVID-19 vaccination needs, and the IIS has been instrumental in this response.

As of July 14, Massachusetts had administered 8,749,218 doses of COVID-19 vaccine. This makes Massachusetts the number two state in the United States in percentage of residents who have received one or more doses of COVID-19 vaccine. It's first among states with a population over five million.

One key to this success has been onboarding providers into the IIS and the Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccination Program (MCVP). Nearly 3,000 providers have been onboarded into the IIS. Onboarding external organizations can be extremely difficult, but the IIS has made it quick and easy for providers to onboard with self-service account creation and data exchange certification testing.

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The IIS has met the changing needs of the MCVP. For example, initial vaccine distribution was done through a push model with centralized decisions on vaccine allocations. This eventually transitioned to a pull model, where individual providers order COVID-19 vaccines. The IIS supported this as well, providing tools that allowed the department to monitor vaccine inventory and review orders. The IIS is also being leveraged to move inventory already in the state to where it is needed most. Looking forward, the IIS is poised to meet any new challenges in the Massachusetts COVID-19 vaccination response, including any post-pandemic vaccination needs.

The department also put together a package of comprehensive, visual, easy-to-read COVID-19 vaccination reports using data queried from the IIS. These reports are used to inform decision makers and the public on a daily and weekly basis. (For example, see the [Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination Report](#) from July 15 prepared using data queried from the Massachusetts IIS.)

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MASSACHUSETTS USES ITS IIS FOR A SUCCESSFUL COVID-19 VACCINE RESPONSE *Continued from page 6*

The reports include:

- Total COVID-19 vaccinations administered
- Total individuals fully vaccinated
- Cumulative percentage of individuals with at least one dose administered by county of resident address
- Cumulative percentage of eligible individuals (aged 12 and older) with at least one dose administered by county of resident address
- Cumulative percentage of individuals who are fully vaccinated by county of resident address
- Cumulative percentage of eligible individuals (aged 12 and older) who are fully vaccinated by county of resident address
- Massachusetts state vaccination rates compared to the rest of the US population
- Individuals with at least one dose administered by county and race/ethnicity
- Individuals with at least one dose administered by county and age group
- Total doses shipped and administered (by type)

All states should be commended for the work they have done during the pandemic and the way they have handled COVID-19 vaccinations. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health hopes the information in this article sparks good ideas and helps other members of the IIS community.

- Submitted by **Kelley Tucker**, Strategic Solutions Group



TWENTY-FOUR THOUSAND VACCINATIONS BEFORE BIRTH

The Oklahoma State Immunization Information System (OSIIS) successfully transitioned from a homegrown system to Enhanced OSIIS in November 2020. However, the migration caused some data to merge incorrectly, resulting in corrupted data for patient records, including siblings, other family members, and some strangers with similar demographics.

A number of records showed vaccinations administered before a patient's date of birth (DOB). The Enhanced OSIIS report, "Shots before Birth," provides valuable information for complete data cleanup by finding records that have been inadvertently merged together. At the start of the project, the report pulled over 24,000 incorrectly administered doses before a patient's DOB.

Two OSIIS team members are working to resolve discrepancies in this report by using the Legacy and the Enhanced OSIIS. The process required to correct these records is complex. While some take only a few minutes to resolve, in other cases it can take hours to accurately discern who was merged during the transfer. Once the correct information has been collected, a new record with complete demographics and vaccination history is built. The existing record containing inaccurate information is also corrected. The process of rebuilding can take over an hour to complete, and completing 100 vaccination details in 8 hours of work is a good day.

Large amounts of data have been cleaned up since the migration, but there are still some records for which we are unable to determine with whom they were incorrectly merged. A color-coded system is being used to differentiate the records that will need extra time to complete versus the completed records. The difficult ones will be revisited, and the process consists of looking up the patient's original chart in Legacy OSIIS. The "Find Patient by Lot Number" report shows any actively administered vaccinations. Legacy OSIIS is being used extensively, as the system will be turned off in the coming months. We recently ran another report showing about 6000 individuals who were not sent from Legacy OSIIS to Enhanced OSIIS. We are confident that the majority of those 6000 missing records will be found and restored accurately.

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TWENTY-FOUR THOUSAND VACCINATIONS BEFORE BIRTH *Continued from page 7*

Here are some takeaway lessons from this project:

- During migration from one IIS to another, it is critical that records are merged correctly by comparing patient demographic data more closely in order to minimize potential data errors.
- Data maintenance, quality, cleanup, and keeping records separate are important factors in integration and migration.

Data cleanup is an ongoing effort and is a priority for Oklahoma's Immunization Program as we strive toward increasing vaccination coverage for children and adults.

*- Submitted by Courtney Woodard, Paula Wall,
Paula Boatner, and Margaret Archer, OSIS*



NAVIGATE YOUR IIS PROCUREMENT WITH CONFIDENCE

Information technology procurements are often complex, both technically and legally, and require thoughtful planning and plenty of lead time.

With funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Public Health Informatics Institute (PHII) developed the [IIS Procurement Toolkit](#) to help IIS teams and immunization programs avoid what could be frustrating, time-consuming, and even costly missteps during an IIS procurement process. The purpose of the toolkit is to support IIS in attaining their performance and sustainability goals through adhering to best practices in the procurement process.

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The toolkit relates to both procuring software (e.g., migrating to a new IIS platform or acquiring a new or replacement module) and obtaining technical services (e.g., obtaining or renewing maintenance and service contracts). The guidance gives a deep dive into the three phases of a procurement process: (1) planning for the process, (2) solicitation of proposals, and (3) contracting with the selected vendor. The procurement process can be overwhelming but is more manageable if you take it one step at a time.

This and other IIS-related toolkits can be found on the [IIS Learning Hub](#), which also includes guidance and additional toolkits on working within an IIS. Additional toolkits include the IIS Migration Toolkit, a road map that guides users through an IIS platform migration or other large-scale IT project. It's rooted in project management best practices and features dozens of tested tools. Visitors can also benefit from more general guidance on day-to-day IIS operations and management, as well as walk-throughs of more highly specialized topics. The IIS Learning Hub also offers examples of stories from the world of IIS, including podcast interviews with IIS experts Therese Hoyle and Mary Beth Kurilo. Readers can find feature profiles on state IIS, most notably those of Oklahoma and Minnesota.

The [IIS Learning Hub](#) regularly undergoes updates and refreshes to remain current and relevant in a rapidly evolving immunization world. PHII is grateful for ongoing collaborations with the CDC, AIRA, and IIS teams from around the United States in developing and refining these tools.

- Submitted by Birgit Bolton, PHII