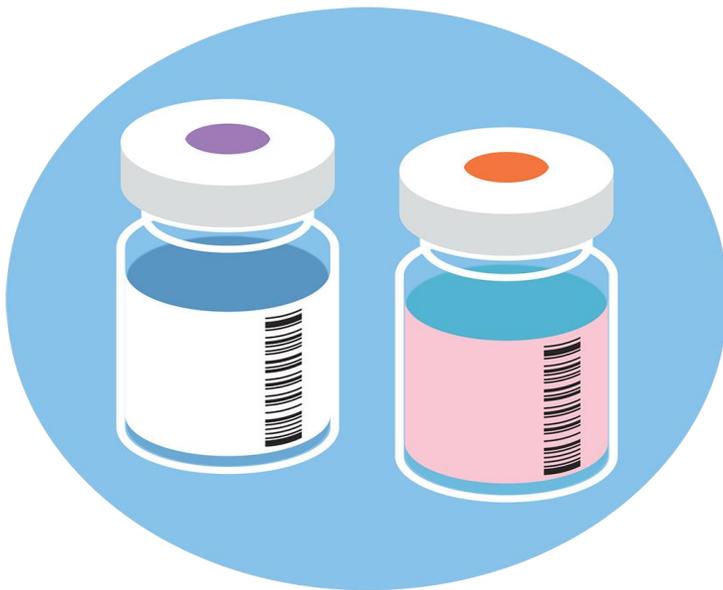


May 13, 2022

Pennsylvania Immunization Program Newsletter



IN THIS ISSUE

CONTENTS

[Vaccines for Children Program](#)

[Vaccine Preventable Disease Trend in PA](#)

[VAERS](#)

[Health Alert Network](#)

[Hepatitis Awareness Month](#)

[Adult Immunization Schedule](#)

[Adolescent Behavior and Experience Survey Results](#)

[COVID Vaccine Program](#)

[Temperature Excursion](#)

[Ordering Vaccines in PA SIIS](#)

[Know Our Team!](#)

[Contact Us](#)

VACCINES FOR CHILDREN PROGRAM (VFC)**2022 Immunization Schedules Now Available**

The 2022 child/adolescent and adult immunization schedules have been published on CDC's website: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html>. This site includes updates to the 2022 child/adolescent and adult immunization schedules and related schedule resources, including the parent friendly schedule and new catch-up schedule job aids.

Pre-Booking for Flu Vaccines

The VFC Program has ordered influenza vaccine in preparation for the 2022-2023 influenza season. The influenza vaccine is for distribution to State Health Centers, County/Municipal Health Departments, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Rural Health Clinics, and private VFC providers.

Ordering influenza vaccine will be done through an online form. VFC staff will then enter the influenza order in PA-SIIS on behalf of each provider. More information regarding the pre-book process, as well as the online order form will be sent to all providers during the first week of June.

VFC Program Requirement Reminders

All enrolled providers are reminded of the following VFC Program requirement. Failure to adhere to any requirements may result in disenrollment from the VFC Program.

Site Closures

Providers who are closing a site must notify Division of Immunizations (DOI). Appropriate arrangements need to be made to maintain temperature monitoring to preserve vaccine viability. The reason for the site closure shall be communicated to DOI. For example: the provider site was temporarily closed due to COVID but now is permanently closed due to staffing shortage.

Vaccine relocation needs to be approved by DOI. This includes relocation to another enrolled site in the same organization or having the vaccine picked up by an immunization nurse. All vaccine must be transported in an approved vaccine transport device with continuous temperature monitoring using currently calibrated digital data loggers. Vaccine inventory is required to be transferred to the new site location in PA-SIIS. DOI must also be notified where patients are being referred due to the closure. The vaccine waste of all providers is tracked by the CDC and PA DOH.

Tracking Vaccine Preventable Diseases in Pennsylvania

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and state government issued stay-at-home orders, millions of Americans have isolated themselves to avoid exposure. One positive result of the social distancing, online schooling, mask wearing and limited international travel is a sharp decline in the reporting of vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs).

A 2021, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report article indicated that during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a substantial decrease in routine pediatric vaccine ordering and sharp declines in vaccine administration. The good news is the stay-at-home orders were gradually lifted during 2021 allowing pediatricians to actively conduct catch-up vaccination.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) analyzes surveillance data to monitor disease trends, detect outbreaks and evaluate the effectiveness of disease control programs and policies. Below are some recent VPDs trends in Pennsylvania.

Vaccine Preventable Disease Trends in Pennsylvania

- As of February 24, 2022, Pennsylvania had a total of 777 reported, confirmed, and probable vaccine-preventable cases with onset in the 2021 MMWR year, which represents a decrease of 17 percent from the previous year.
- There were 397 pertussis cases in 2021. This represents a 77.6 percent decrease from 2020.
- The 7 reported mumps cases in 2021 represented a 71 percent decrease from 2020.
- There were 194 reported varicella cases in 2021, which represents a 12.1 percent increase from the previous year.
- Five confirmed invasive meningococcal disease cases were reported in 2021, which is a 77.3 percent decrease compared to 2020.

To prevent outbreaks of VPDs, health care providers should assess the vaccination status of all pediatric patients, including adolescents, and contact those who are behind schedule to ensure that all children and adolescents are fully vaccinated.

Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS)

VAERS is a national program managed by the CDC and the FDA to monitor the safety of all vaccines licensed in the U.S. It is a nationwide system for reporting, analyzing, and publishing information on adverse events related to vaccines. Providers are required to submit VAERS reports regarding any adverse reaction following vaccine administration. VAERS reports can be submitted online at <https://vaers.hhs.gov/index> or by calling directly at 1-800-822-7967.

Reportable Events:

- Any adverse events listed by the vaccine manufacturer as a contraindication for future doses of the vaccine.
- Any adverse event listed on the [VAERS Table of Reportable Events](#) following vaccination

PA Health Alert Network (PA-HAN)

The Health Alert Network is part of the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Program and was established under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). PA-HAN issues several different types of messages, depending on their level of importance and what actions need to be taken:

- **Health Alert:** provides vital, time-sensitive information for a specific incident or situation; warrants immediate action or attention by health officials, laboratorians, clinicians, and members of the public; and conveys the highest level of importance.
- **Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; contains recommendations or actionable items to be performed by public health officials, laboratorians, and/or clinicians; may not require immediate action.
- **Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

If you are a public health professional, sign up for the Pennsylvania Health Alert Network at the following link:
<https://ondemand.mir3.com/han-pa-gov/login/>

ADULT IMMUNIZATIONS PROGRAM**May is recognized as Hepatitis Awareness Month**

During the month of May, the Division of Immunizations and our partners work to highlight the disease and raise public awareness of viral hepatitis.

Providers can take advantage of resources below to encourage their patients to get tested, and to promote vaccinations for hepatitis A and B.

- [Hepatitis Awareness Month | CDC](#)
- [Social Media Toolkit for Hepatitis Awareness Month | CDC](#)
- [Hepatitis B - Vaccination of Adults | CDC](#)



The adult immunization schedule has been updated.

[Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule \(cdc.gov\)](#)

Hepatitis B Vaccine: Updates on Recommendations for Adults

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recently recommended hepatitis B vaccination for all adults 19-59 years of age, along with adults 60 years or older with risk factors for this disease or without known risk factors but wanting protection from hepatitis B.

According to one 2019 CDC surveillance report:

- There are an estimated 20,700 acute Hepatitis B infections every year.
- Over 1 billion dollars are spent on hepatitis B related hospitalizations every year (this does not include indirect costs).

What is already known about this topic?

Vaccination with hepatitis B (HepB) vaccines shows well-established safety and efficacy. However, because of risk factor-based approaches of previous vaccination recommendations, coverage among adults has been suboptimal.

What is added by this report?

In addition to groups for whom HepB vaccination is already recommended, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends that all adults aged 19–59 years should receive HepB vaccines.

What are the implications for public health practice?

Universal adult HepB vaccination through age 59 years removes the need for risk factor screening and disclosure and could increase vaccination coverage and decrease hepatitis B cases.

For the complete report, available on the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), please click the following link:

[Universal Hepatitis B Vaccination in Adults Aged 19–59 Years: Updated Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices](#)

Snapshot: Correct Dose for Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and Combo Vaccines

Providers can review this useful guide on choosing the correct dose for hepatitis vaccines, courtesy of Immunize.org (formerly Immunization Action Coalition).

[Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B Vaccines: Be Sure Your Patients Get the Correct Dose](#)

Pneumococcal Vaccines: Updated Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices

The CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) has updated guidance on the use of these two vaccines, **"Use of 15-Valent Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine and 20-Valent Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine Among U.S. Adults: Updated Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices"**.

Providers can review this summary by clicking the following link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7104a1.html>

HPV Vaccine: Updated Guidance on Funding

The Division of Immunizations has updated guidance on use of Section 317 funding for HPV vaccine. Previously, DOI policy has been to allow HPV vaccine purchased with Section 317 funds to be used only for 'catch-up' to age 26. Now, Section 317 funding may be used, based on shared clinical decision-making recommendations, to vaccinate adults ages 27 through 45 years.

Please review the following CDC guidance when ordering this vaccine for ages 27 through 45 years

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends 11- to 12-year-olds get two doses of HPV vaccine to protect against cancers caused by HPV. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) also recommends vaccination for **everyone through age 26 years** if not adequately vaccinated when younger. HPV vaccination is given as a series of either two or three doses, depending on age at initial vaccination.
- Vaccination is not recommended for everyone older than age 26 years. Some adults ages 27 through 45 years might decide to get the HPV vaccine based on discussion with their clinician, if they did not get adequately vaccinated when they were younger. HPV vaccination of people in this age range provides less benefit, for several reasons, including that more people in this age range have already been exposed to HPV.
- **For adults ages 27 through 45 years, clinicians can consider discussing HPV vaccination with people who are most likely to benefit.** HPV vaccination does not need to be discussed with most adults over age 26 years. See ACIP's [shared clinical decision-making FAQs](#).



ADOLESCENT IMMUNIZATIONS PROGRAM

Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey (ABES) Result

CDC released new data from the Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey (ABES) highlighting the magnitude of the challenges our nation's youth faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. ABES is the first nationally representative look at the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health of national's youth.

ABES Highlighted Findings:

Adolescents Are Experiencing a Mental Health Crisis

- More than 1 in 3 high school students experienced poor mental health during COVID-19 and 44% reported they persistently felt sad or hopeless during the past year.
- Female students and those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, other or questioning (LGBQ) are experiencing disproportionate levels of poor mental health and suicide-related behaviors.
- For example, in 2021, 12% of female students, more than 25% of LGB students, and 17% of other or questioning students attempted suicide during the past year compared to 5% of their male peers and 5% of their heterosexual peers, respectively.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a seismic effect on communities across the country, and young people have been especially impacted by the ways in which their everyday lives have been altered. The disruptions were widespread – school buildings closed, opportunities for connecting with peers were limited, communities were dealing with loss and upheaval. While the pandemic has affected all students, the experiences of disruption and adversity have not affected all students equally.

Daily Life Was Disrupted

- The range of impacts on youth's daily lives was broad, including the following social determinants of health difficulties: family economic impacts, hunger, and abuse in the home.
- More than half of students experienced emotional abuse in their home and more than 10% reported physical abuse in the home.
- Lesbian, gay, and bisexual students were far more likely to report physical abuse, with 20% reporting that they had been physically abused by a parent or other adult in their home, compared to 10% of heterosexual students.
- Black students were most likely to report hunger, with nearly a third reporting that there was not enough food in their home during the pandemic.

Racism Is a Public Health Problem

- Over a third (36%) of students said they experienced racism before or during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The highest levels were reported among Asian students (64%) and Black students and students of multiple races (both 55%).
- The survey cannot determine the extent to which events during the pandemic contributed to reported racism. However, experiences of racism among youth have been linked to poor mental health, academic performance, and lifelong health risk behaviors.

School connectedness provided critical protection for students during COVID-19

- Findings also highlight that a sense of being cared for, supported, and belonging at school — called “school connectedness” — had an important effect on students during a time of severe disruption.
- Youth who felt connected to adults and peers at school were significantly less likely than those who did not to report persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness (35% vs. 53%); that they seriously considered attempting suicide (14% vs. 26%); or attempted suicide (6% vs. 12%). However, fewer than half (47%) of youth reported feeling close to people at school during the pandemic.

Before the pandemic, mental health was getting worse among high school students, according to [prior CDC data](#). All these data were released as an *MMWR Surveillance Supplement*, come from the ABES, CDC’s first nationally representative survey of public and private school high school students to assess the well-being of U.S. youth during the COVID-19 pandemic. Funded through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, CDC fielded the survey during January – June 2021. **Please visit the following links to obtain access to the ABES Questionnaires:**

[English Version](#)

[Spanish Version](#)

ABES was funded through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Findings are detailed in five articles in the [MMWR Surveillance Supplement](#).

Source: *Division of Adolescent and School Health, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention*

COVID-19 VACCINE PROGRAM

Updating Provider Contact Information

As provider COVID-19 site visits continue, it is important to ensure that the vaccination program has the most up-to-date contact information. It is especially important to keep the primary and secondary COVID-19 vaccine coordinators up to date. Please use this form to provide relevant updates:

[Information Update Form for Providers Enrolled with Pennsylvania's COVID Vaccine Program](#)

Disenrollment from COVID-19 Vaccine Program

The COVID-19 Vaccination Program is aware that some providers no longer wish to participate in the program due to factors such as decreased vaccine demand, program requirements, staffing issues, etc.

Below are the steps providers shall take when they wish to disenroll from the COVID-19 vaccination program:

- Providers must inform the PADOH COVID vaccine program at least fifteen days before they intend to terminate the CDC COVID-19 Vaccine provider agreement and disenroll from the program. Notification can be emailed to RA-DHCOVIDVAX@pa.gov.
- Upon receiving such notification, providers will be sent a link with instructions to complete the COVID-19 Vaccine program disenrollment form in its entirety.
- When the disenrollment form is processed, RA-DHCOVIDVAX@pa.gov will send a confirmation email to the primary and backup vaccine coordinators.
- **REMEMBER:** Providers are responsible to store COVID vaccines appropriately in accordance with program requirements and be accountable for all COVID vaccines obtained from the state's allocation until the request for disenrollment is approved and the immunization program can make plans for relocation of vaccines.
- Disenrolled providers must re-enroll if they wish to administer COVID vaccines in the future.

CDC Updates

CDC has released additional guidance for the option to receive a second COVID-19 vaccine booster dose on the [Clinical Considerations page](#) and on this [fact sheet](#). (Updated on 4/21/2022).

Resources for Providers

[6 Things to Know about COVID-19 Vaccination for Children | CDC](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccine Interim COVID-19 Immunization Schedule for Ages 5 Years and Older \(cdc.gov\)](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccine: Quick Reference Guide for Healthcare Professionals \(cdc.gov\)](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccination Provider Requirements and Support | CDC](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccine Providers \(pa.gov\)](#)

[COVID-19 \(immunize.org\)](#)

[COVID-19 Suspensions \(pa.gov\)](#)

FDA Alert!

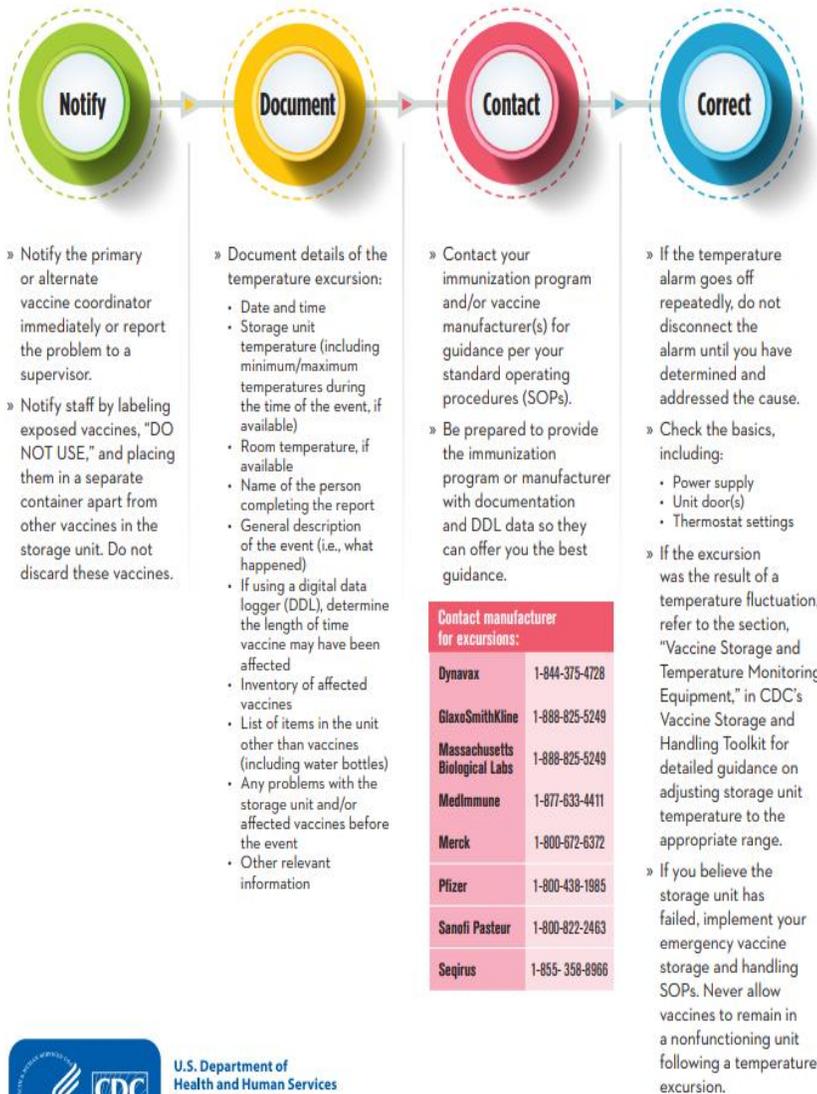
On May 5, 2022 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced that it has limited the authorized use of the **Janssen COVID-19 vaccine** to individuals 18 years of age and older for whom other authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccines are not accessible or clinically appropriate, and to individuals 18 years of age and older who elect to receive the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine because they would otherwise not receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

Please read the full statement by the FDA here: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Update: FDA Limits Use of Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine to Certain Individuals | FDA](#)

BEST PRACTICE REFRESHER

Temperature Excursion

Any temperature reading outside ranges recommended in the manufacturers' package inserts is considered a temperature excursion. Identify temperature excursions quickly and take immediate action to correct them. This can prevent vaccine waste and the potential need to revaccinate patients.



COVID VACCINE	WEBSITE	TELEPHONE #
Pfizer	https://www.pfizer.com/	(800) 438-1985
Moderna	https://www.modernatx.com/	(866) 663-3762
Janssen	https://www.janssen.com/	(800) 565-4008

Notes

If vaccine temperatures are out of recommended ranges for **less than 30 minutes** during temperature logging, take immediate action to correct the problem.

- Providers shall document corrective action taken on the temperature log and recheck temperatures every 30 minutes to ensure temperatures have returned to acceptable ranges.
- If there is not enough space on the temperature log to document corrective action taken, write the action taken on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to the temperature log.
- Retain this information for three years.

If vaccine temperatures are out of recommended ranges for **more than 30 minutes**:

- Immediately call the vaccine manufacturers.
- Mark the vaccine "Do Not Use".
- Contact the regional field staffs or the respective Vaccine Program to request a copy of the Vaccine Incident Report and Worksheet.
- This form shall be completed within **five** days of the incident.

Ordering Vaccines in PA-SIIS

1. Using your Web browser, navigate to the PA-SIIS website: <https://siis.health.state.pa.us/siis>. When the Log-In screen appears, enter your username and password into the appropriate fields. The password will display as a series of asterisks (****) for security purposes.
2. Click on the **Inventory** button on the left-hand side of the main page.
3. Maximize the Edit Inventory screen by clicking on the box beside the **X** in the top right-hand corner of the screen (if not already maximized).
4. Verify that your clinic name is in the **Choose Clinic** field.
5. Receive outstanding shipments. Please see the QRS on '[Receiving Shipments in PA-SIIS](#)' if you are not familiar with the process.
6. **Reconcile** inventory.
7. Click on the **Orders** button.
8. Click on the **Add** orders button.
9. **Select** the vaccine(s) your clinic is requesting.
10. Please enter the **number of DOSES** you want in the box – **not** the number of vials/packs.
 - a. Please consult the vaccine program if you do not have the most current information regarding the minimum dose quantities and vaccine configurations available for ordering.
11. Check off the two boxes and then click **Update**.
12. Click **Ok** to save the transaction.

Reminders

All vaccines available through the Division of Immunizations are subject to required ordering quantities. Vaccines must be ordered based on the number of doses being requested. If a vaccine being ordered is only available in multiples of 10 doses (i.e., 10-pack of single doses), the minimum number of doses ordered must be “10”. Entering “1” to order one 10-pack is incorrect. When placing vaccine orders in PA-SIIS, use the required ordering quantities below to determine the number of doses that should be entered. Enter the number of doses needed based on the available multiples.

Vaccines	Min Ordering Quantities
Td (TDVAX) / PPSV23 (Pneumovax 23)/ Meningococcal B, OMV (Bexsero)	Any number of doses
Pentacel / ActHIB/ Menactra /Menveo / MenQuadfi /Adacel (SYR only)	Multiples of 5 doses
Pfizer Pediatric (5 through 12 years) / Moderna10 (age 18 years and older)	100 doses and increments
Pfizer Tris (age 12 years and older)	300 doses and increments
Zooster Recomd (Shingrix)	One single dose or a kit of 10 single dose
All other VFC, adolescent and adult vaccines	Multiples of 10 doses

KNOW OUR TEAM MEMBERS!!

Meet **Robert (Bobby) Kobilis**, one of the statisticians of the PA-SIIS team with the Division of Immunizations. Bobby has been with **PA-SIIS** for more than six years. He played a monumental role when it came to meeting the reporting requirements for the Health Department's COVID-19 pandemic response and vaccination roll out. He has recently been commended by the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH) for his excellent performance during this time of great pressure, being recognized as the department's employee of the month. He is also one of the recipients of the prestigious and competitive program, the **Governor's Award for Excellence, 2021**. His colleagues consistently describe him as a very skilled, kind, and friendly individual who can rise to any challenge. Please read our short Q&A with Bobby below!

**How would you describe your professional background?**

After graduating high school in 2004, I had attended several semesters of college, but due to some challenging life circumstances, had to withdraw from academia. In May 2008 I became an employee of the Commonwealth, working as a Residential Services Aide at the White Haven Center for eight and half years. During that time, I also decided to return to Wilkes University and obtain a bachelor's degree in mathematics. This degree made me eligible to apply for statistical positions within the Department of Health.

When working as a statistician in the Department of Health, describe two projects that you have particularly enjoyed.

Although challenging, the designing/constructing of the Access database and affiliated SAS programs for the COVID Provider Agreements, and the process I developed to analyze large volumes of HL7 messages and make corrections to erroneously sent data. Both initiatives helped me gauge my capabilities.

Please describe the PA-SIIS team in three words.

Resilient, kind, patient

How do you feel about being selected as an employee of the month for DOH in February 2022?

Honored; and I feel that there are many deserving people for this type of recognition.

Will you please offer two suggestions to providers with respect to data and reporting?

Foremost, accuracy in reporting the many data elements that are parts of both patient demographics and vaccination records. Secondly, never send test data to a live Production system as there are test environments available.

Can you describe how COVID-19 has changed your working environment?

The most profound change has been collaboration with so many new groups and leadership from DOH and other departments.

What are the top three things on your bucket list?

Become a master-level energy healer. Go prospecting and excavate my own precious gems like Opal. Own an orchard or farm containing medicinal herbs.

"Thank you for all you do, Bobby "- Division of Immunizations

CONTACT US

For all general concerns and questions please call our main line at **888-646-6864**. For program specific inquiries, you can also send us an email to program specific resource accounts:

VFC: ra-pavfc@pa.gov

Adolescent & Adult: ra-dhimmunize@pa.gov

COVID: ra-dhccovidvax@pa.gov

PA SIIS: ra-dhpasiis@pa.gov

If you have questions or follow up related to a site visit, please contact the field staff member that conducted the visit. Contact information of the field staffs can be found in the table below:

<i>Region</i>	<i>Staff's Name</i>	<i>Email</i>	<i>Phone</i>
<i>Northwest</i>	Connie Moose	cmoose@pa.gov	717-307-5257
	Wynne Dunkle	wydunkle@pa.gov	717-319-9064
	Jenna Zuzek	jzuzek@pa.gov	814-494-7704
<i>Southwest</i>	Shawn Baer	shbaer@pa.gov	717-395-2885
	Connie Douglas	codouglas@pa.gov	717-395-3774
	Coleen Rush	crush@pa.gov	724-967-6049
	Lauren Risser (COVID)	larisser@pa.gov	412-773-0653
<i>North central</i>	Robin Harp	rharp@pa.gov	570-327-3400
	Shannon Garey (COVID)	sgarey@pa.gov	570-436-0981
<i>South central</i>	Diana Kint	dikint@pa.gov	717-562-1499
	Hayley Eager	heager@pa.gov	717-395-6381
	Johnny Raynor	joraynor@pa.gov	717-395-1586
	Alpha Burke (COVID)	c-alburke@pa.gov	717-887-0597
<i>Northeast</i>	Bill Court	wcourt@pa.gov	717-439-5911
	Joe Shamonsky	jshamonsky@pa.gov	717-319-4713
	Lisa Myers	lmyers@pa.gov	717-409-2912
	Tamara Higgins-Cain	thigginsca@pa.gov	717-395-3474
	Marie DeLuca (COVID)	c-mdeluca@pa.gov	570-814-6534
<i>Southeast</i>	Beth Smith	bethsmith@pa.gov	717-395-6450
	Peggy Glass	pglass@pa.gov	717-364-7022
	Latanya Cooper (COVID)	c-lacooper@pa.gov	267-288-3300

UPCOMING EVENTS

2022 Pennsylvania Immunization Conference

The 2022 Pennsylvania Immunization Conference (PIC 2022) will be held on Tuesday, June 14, 2022, at the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, PA. Please visit <https://ce.med.psu.edu/pennsylvania-immunization-conference/> for more information and to register.