

Provider availability linked to COVID-19 vaccine uptake in children

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The availability of vaccine providers increases COVID-19 vaccine

coverage among children aged 5 to 11 years, according to research published in the July 1 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Jennifer DeCuir, M.D., Ph.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues examined how provider availability influenced COVID-19 vaccination coverage among [children](#) aged 5 to 11 years using data on active COVID-19 [vaccine](#) providers and county-level vaccine administration data during Nov. 1, 2021, to April 25, 2022.

The researchers found that 87.5 percent of the 2,586 U.S. counties included in the analysis had at least one active COVID-19 vaccine provider serving children aged 5 to 11 years. Of the five active provider types assessed, most counties had at least one pharmacy or public health clinic (69.1 and 61.3 percent, respectively), while fewer had at least one pediatric clinic, family medicine clinic, or federally qualified health center (29.7, 29.0, and 22.8 percent, respectively). The median vaccination coverage was 14.5 percent at the county-level. Vaccination coverage was higher in counties with at least one active COVID-19 vaccine provider than in counties with no active providers after adjustment for social vulnerability index and urbanicity (adjusted rate ratio, 1.66). For each provider type, presence of at least one provider in the county was associated with higher coverage; the difference in coverage was largest comparing counties with and without pediatric clinics (adjusted rate ratio, 1.37).

"Ensuring widespread access to COVID-19 vaccines, in addition to other strategies to address barriers to vaccination, could increase vaccination coverage among children aged 5 to 11 years," the authors write.

More information: Jennifer DeCuir et al, COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Availability and Vaccination Coverage Among Children Aged 5–11 Years—United States, November 1, 2021–April 25, 2022,

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