

Provider Notice

December 31, 2025

Illinois State “Start at 9”: Call to Action to Prevent HPV Cancers

CountyCare network providers, please see the below information released from The American Cancer Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National HPV Vaccination Roundtable and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Human papillomavirus (HPV) infections are very common, and nearly everyone will get HPV at some point in their lives. The HPV vaccine is cancer prevention: safely and effectively preventing over 90% of HPV cancers (cervical, vaginal, vulvar, penile, throat, anal) when given to all children between ages 9 and 12 years. Vaccination before age 13 will prevent more cancers than vaccination at older ages. Data from 2024 shows only 42% of children in Illinois were fully vaccinated before 13. We urge you to recommend the HPV vaccine to all parents and guardians of eligible patients starting at age 9.

Data from 2024 shows high adolescent vaccination rates for meningitis (94%) and Tdap (94%), yet rates for up to date (UTD) HPV vaccination lag behind (66%). This disparity underscores the urgent need to elevate HPV vaccination to the same priority level as other routine adolescent immunizations. A patient with a strong provider’s recommendation is significantly more likely to start and complete the HPV vaccine series.

The American Cancer Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National HPV Vaccination Roundtable and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend HPV vaccination start at age 9. Some of the benefits of a provider giving a strong recommendation for HPV vaccination at age 9 include:

- **More time to complete the vaccination series by age 13**
- **Protection against HPV before the first HPV exposure**
- **Reduction in the number of shots administered per visit**
- **More children up to date with HPV vaccination, as found in several studies**

Our Call-to-Action:

- 1. Provide high-quality HPV recommendations starting at age 9.** One way to do so is using the “Announcement Approach.” See this flyer to learn more and watch these example videos for 9-10 year olds, and 11-12 year olds.
- 2. Engage your clinical and non-clinical team in HPV vaccination efforts by referring to action guides for physicians, nurses, administrative staff, and other roles.** You can also identify a champion among your practice to establish ways to evaluate, sustain, and celebrate success.
- 3. Reduce missed opportunities for vaccination through evidence-based interventions, such as reminder and recall.**

By working together and prioritizing HPV vaccination, we can create a better future for our youth and reduce the burden of cancer in Illinois. Join the members of the Illinois HPV Advisory Council in our commitment to routinely recommend HPV vaccination starting at age 9.



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Thank you for working with us to ensure CountyCare members receive quality care at the right time and in the right setting. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact CountyCare Provider Services at 312-864-8200. You can also use our Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system to verify eligibility. For CountyCare Provider Relations, email countycareproviderservices@cookcountyhhs.org or your assigned Provider Relations Representative.