

NMDOH News Brief

IMMUNIZATION



Educating through Community Outreach efforts

Andrea Romero
Immunization Program Manager

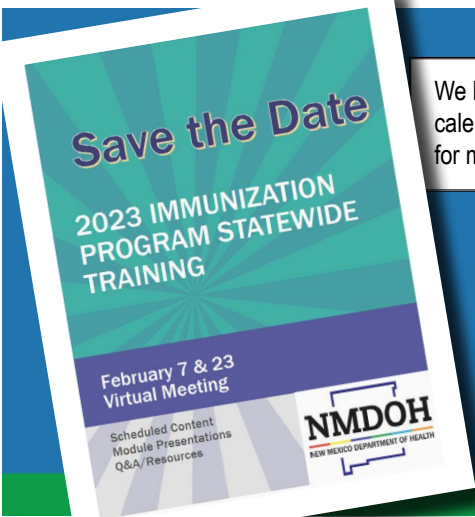
The Immunization Program has been participating in outreach efforts in the community recently to engage with the public regarding the importance of immunizations and to also provide a reminder about vaccine schedules. Prior to the pandemic, Program staff had regularly participated at local events by hosting a table.

Now that community events are beginning to come back, our staff are once again attending to provide

Community Outreach efforts
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On August 6, Joelle Jacobs, Vaccine and Outreach Manager; Kiana Vigil, Finance Clerk; and Elias Martinez, NMSIIS Data Admin., attended the Viva Tu Vida event in Los Lunas as part of the Get up! Get Moving! efforts.



We hope you will mark your calendars now! Stay tuned for more details.

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NMIC Immunization Champions

Anna Pentler, MPH, MBA
NM Immunization Coalition

2021 was an extraordinary year for immunizations! The COVID-19 pandemic created enormous challenges to our health care system, and getting vaccine developed, approved, manufactured and distributed in record time was a herculean effort. A countless number of people have made outstanding contributions to this effort, so this year we are awarding an unprecedented seven Immunization Champions

to reflect the tremendous number of folks going above and beyond to immunize our communities. We've included a brief summary of their exemplary contributions below. Join us in congratulating our 2021 Champions!

Immunization Champions

- ★ *Andrea Romero*
- ★ *Kathryn (Katie) Cruz*
- ★ *Joelle Jacobs*
- ★ *Jody Wagner*
- ★ *Amy Bachyrycz*
- ★ *Gabriella Blakey*
- ★ *Dale Tinker*

Andrea Romero, Immunization Program Manager

Andrea is amazing! She is a quiet but extremely effective force behind the Immunization Program. She stepped into the role of Program Manager, while continuing in her previous role as Finance Manager. She manages huge, expanded budgets, contracts and programs with skill and

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Community Outreach efforts *continued from page 1*

educational immunization resources and demo the use of VaxView NM to show how to obtain an individual immunization record for quick access.

On September 12, Joelle Jacobs, Vaccine and Outreach Manager, Kiana Vigil, Finance Clerk, and Lyndsey Cordova, NMSIIS trainer, attended the New Mexico State Fair for Healthy Living / Seniors' Celebration Day. The theme for the day brought out many people to the fair and tabling events which also had a mobile vaccine clinic on site.

Photos on the right: September 12 New Mexico State Fair event.



COVID-19 Bivalent Boosters

Andrea Romero
Immunization Program Manager

COVID-19 boosters are available in New Mexico. The vaccine rollout for Pfizer BIVALENT 12+ and Moderna BIVALENT 18+ started on September 1. You can check if and when to get COVID-19 boosters with the CDC's COVID-19 booster tool. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html#when-you-can-get-booster>

The updated COVID-19 boosters add Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 spike protein components to the mRNA COVID-19 vaccine composition, increasing protection against the currently circulating variants.

Effective August 31, the FDA announced Monovalent mRNA

COVID-19 vaccines are **no longer** authorized for use as boosters in people ages 12 years and older. Monovalent mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are to be used as primary doses only.

Here's a frequently asked question that often comes up.

Q: Is it safe to give the bivalent COVID-19 booster the same day as a flu shot?

A: A wealth of evidence from routine vaccines—plus recent evidence from several studies specifically on COVID-19 and flu—indicates they are safe to give at the same visit on

the same day at different injection sites. This practice is recommended by CDC and its Advisory Committee on Immunizations Practices (ACIP).

The COVID-19 Booster Bivalents for children aged 5-11 years are in the planning steps for a Mid-October rollout. CDC has released the Fall Vaccination Operational Planning Guide for this preparation. For the latest updates on COVID-19 boosters in New Mexico, please refer to our webpage at: <https://cv.nmhealth.org/2022/09/02/new-omicron-covid-19-boosters-offer-enhanced-protection/>

The 8.5" x 11" pdf's shown below are part of the OMICRON Booster Toolkit that is now available, [click here](#).



Got Shots?

Got Shots 2022 Summary

Anna Pentler, MPH, MBA
NM Immunization Coalition

This year's Got Shots events took place from July 9 through August 31 to allow even more time for parents to get their children up to date. Schools in Southern NM started extra early this year, so we pushed the starting date back to allow more time before school got underway.

Seventy-four providers from across the state participated this year, representing 26 of our 33 counties. With just over half of the providers reporting numbers, clinics saw over 2,044 children and administered over 4,990 shots. Approximately 10% of the children were ages 0-2, about 26% were ages 3-6, and 63% were ages 7-18.

The NM Primary Care Association, NMDOH, NMIC and our managed care partners, BCBSNM, Presbyterian and Western Sky Community Care, donated incentives for the children getting immunized. Incentives included scholastic books, coloring books and crayons, pencils, rubber ducks and stickers. We appreciate all who participated in making this year's Got Shots events a success!

Immunization Program *Staffing announcements*

Mitchell LeBlanc / *Finance Manager*

Mitchell LeBlanc was recently hired as the new Finance Manager. Mitchell originally started in the program working his way up the Finance ladder within the Department of Health. Mitchell brings years of experience of finance, contracts, and procurement under NM state government model accounting practices. We are happy to have him back in the office as part of the Immunization management team. Welcome back Mitchell.



Martha Griego Retirement



On August 1, Martha Griego retired from New Mexico State Government.

Martha initially started with the New Mexico Department of Health, Public Health Division, Infectious Disease Bureau, Immunization Program during the H1N1 Pandemic. Martha assisted with clerical and administrative duties working her way up to a Financial Specialist in the Program.

Throughout the years Martha contributed with processing priority procurements and ensuring the program stayed in good standing with Financial Processes. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Martha processed numerous requests to assist with COVID-19 Vaccine efforts statewide in a short turnaround time. The amount of time and dedication for these efforts was a true showing of compassion from Martha. We are going to miss Martha at the office, and we wish her the best in her retirement. Thank you for everything Martha! All the best from us at the Immunization Program.



Veronica Rosales / *QI/QA Epidemiologist*

We would like to announce our new QI/QA Epidemiologist. Veronica has her MPH and has experience working with provider offices, data analysis, community partners, and patient education. We are excited to have her on board and she will be a great addition to the team!

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**Immunization
Champions**

★ *Andrea Romero*

★ *Kathryn (Katie) Cruz*

★ *Joelle Jacobs*

★ *Jody Wagner*

★ *Amy Bachyrycz*

★ *Gabriella Blakey*

★ *Dale Tinker*

diplomacy. Andrea is a strong and efficient leader not just for the Immunization Program but also overseeing the Better Together contracts and serving as the Finance Chief in the Incident Command Structure. During the past two years, she has worked tirelessly, clocking long hours and working many weekends to keep the Program running smoothly and to accomplish the huge task of getting NM vaccinated against COVID-19.

**Kathryn (Katie) Cruz, NMSIIS
Manager, Immunization Program**

Katie has taken NMSIIS to new levels during the COVID pandemic and continues to be a leader in the IIS field by

continually striving to improve NMSIIS. She was a key member of the data team during COVID helping to create the tracking systems that allowed DOH and State leaders to manage the pandemic based on sound data. She has worked hard with her team to onboard most tribal and IHS immunization programs, to bring them into the state numbers and created a weekly IHS report by site. Katie worked with RTS to resolve data exchange issues. She has promoted VaxViewNM as well as developed an excellent call center, answering

questions from the public, providing great customer service for people in need of vaccine records. On the national level, Katie led her team to receive an AIRA excellence award. Under her leadership, NM appears to be a frontrunner in adopting new technologies.

**Joelle Jacobs, Vaccine and Outreach
Manager, Immunization Program**

Joelle is the lead on managing ordering, distribution, tracking and redistribution of public vaccines for NM. She intimately knows the needs of COVID vaccinators, as well as their capacity and overstocking. She is extremely effective in advocating

for vaccine supply with the CDC. Along with a core crew at the Program, she worked tremendous hours to assure uninterrupted service and supply statewide. She manages the complicated business of COVID vaccine redistribution, directing operations of moving vaccine to where it is needed. Joelle also manages the Perinatal Hep B vaccination program, the Quality Improvement program and is starting the Adult Immunization program. Joelle’s contribution to the Immunization Program cannot be overstated.

**Jody Wagner, Director of Nursing
Services, NM Department of Health,
Public Health Division, Metro
Region**

Jody was central to developing and implementing vaccination opportunities throughout the community for COVID vaccination and for childhood vaccine. Jody’s commitment to health equity made her a natural fit to work with the many community partners who advocate for the health of New Mexicans. She was committed to making sure the most vulnerable members of our community were served. Jody collaborated with schools to implement large-scale vaccination events throughout Albuquerque for all childhood vaccines including COVID-19, resulting

in the administration of thousands of childhood vaccines.

Amy Bachyrycz, PharmD, Walgreens and UNM College of Pharmacy

Amy was instrumental in getting pharmacies prepared for providing COVID-19 vaccinations. She helped her company establish vaccination clinics, coordinated staffing for clinics from the initial vaccination authorizations through current clinics. She worked to have mobile clinics in operation. Amy even travelled to homes to vaccinate homebound seniors. Amy is the reason Pharmacy Technicians were authorized to administer vaccinations in NM. She is the primary trainer for both pharmacists prescribing and administering vaccinations as well as pharmacy technicians who—due to her efforts—can administer any vaccine that a pharmacist is authorized to prescribe.

Gabriella Blakey, PhD, Chief of Operations, Albuquerque Public Schools

Dr. Blakey has been an advocate for setting up immunization sites throughout APS and facilitating the use of APS facilities. She has sent public notices so families

are aware of the immunization sites and options. She has assured that hundreds of children have had access to needed vaccinations in the midst of a pandemic. Events are advertised on the APS website and mailings sent to families.

Dale Tinker, Executive Director, NM Pharmacist Association

Dale has led the NM Pharmacists Association for many years. His work towards changing pharmacy practice to allow pharmacists to prescribe vaccine started in 2001. Dale continued to advance this prescriptive authority with updates over the years. At the onset of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, Dale helped educate

community pharmacists about the process so that they were able to provide vaccinations to their patients. Dale is passionate and dedicated to not only vaccines, but to his community and towards educating pharmacists.

Save the Date

2023 IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM STATEWIDE TRAINING

February 7 & 23 Virtual Meeting

Scheduled Content
Module Presentations
Q&A/Resources

NMDOH
NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Monkeypox virus updates

Andrea Romero
Immunization Program Manager

For the most up-to-date information regarding the Monkeypox virus in New Mexico, please refer to the New Mexico Department of Health website. Updates are continuously occurring on the site and the statics and weekly reports are posted on a one-page document for reference.

op ed--"Monkeypox: What is it? Am I at risk? Who should get vaccinated? How can we stop the spread?" was recently posted on the [DOH website](#) by authors, Department of Health Deputy Cabinet Secretary

Laura Chanchien Parajón, MD, MPH and T. Justin Garoutte, MPH, CPH with the Office of Health Equity at the Department of Health.

If you think you are at risk and are interested in a vaccine or testing, you can receive a confidential consultation with the DOH Call Center at 1-855-600-3453; option 4 for English; option 9 for Spanish. You can also register [online](#). For more information about monkeypox visit [nmhealth.org](#) and click on the monkeypox tab in the upper right corner.

For current New Mexico and national case counts [click here](#).

The messaging Toolkit has detailed fact sheets in English, Spanish, and Dine. [Click here](#) for Factsheets, Posters, Flyers, Pamphlets, and images and messages for social media posting.



What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a viral zoonotic disease, meaning that it can spread from animals to humans. It can also spread between people.

Why the name monkeypox?

It was first identified in colonies of monkeys kept for research in 1958.

It was only later detected in humans in 1970.

What do I do if I think I have monkeypox?

- Isolate yourself
- Avoid close contact with others
- Clean hands regularly
- Contact your healthcare provider for advice, testing, and treatment.

There are no treatments specifically for monkeypox virus infections. But monkeypox and smallpox viruses are similar, so antiviral drugs and vaccines developed to protect against smallpox may be used to prevent and treat monkeypox virus infections.

For more information about monkeypox, visit: [nmhealth.org/about/phd/idb/mpv](#)

Contact us

NM Department of Health
Andrea Romero
Immunization Program Manager
Phone: (505) 827-2465
Andrea.Romero@doh.nm.gov

immunization.doh.nm.gov
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