

There's No Wrong Door to Vaccination: Reflections from PSW's Interdisciplinary Immunization Summit

by Lindsey Skubitz, 2020 PharmD Candidate

The Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin's first Immunization Summit was a huge hit with over 120 interprofessional attendees across the state gathering to discuss vaccine access and collaborations. Demonstrating the desire for more collaboration, attendees were professionally diverse and included pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, physicians, nurses, health plan representatives, medical assistants, county health department or immunization coalition members, Wisconsin Department

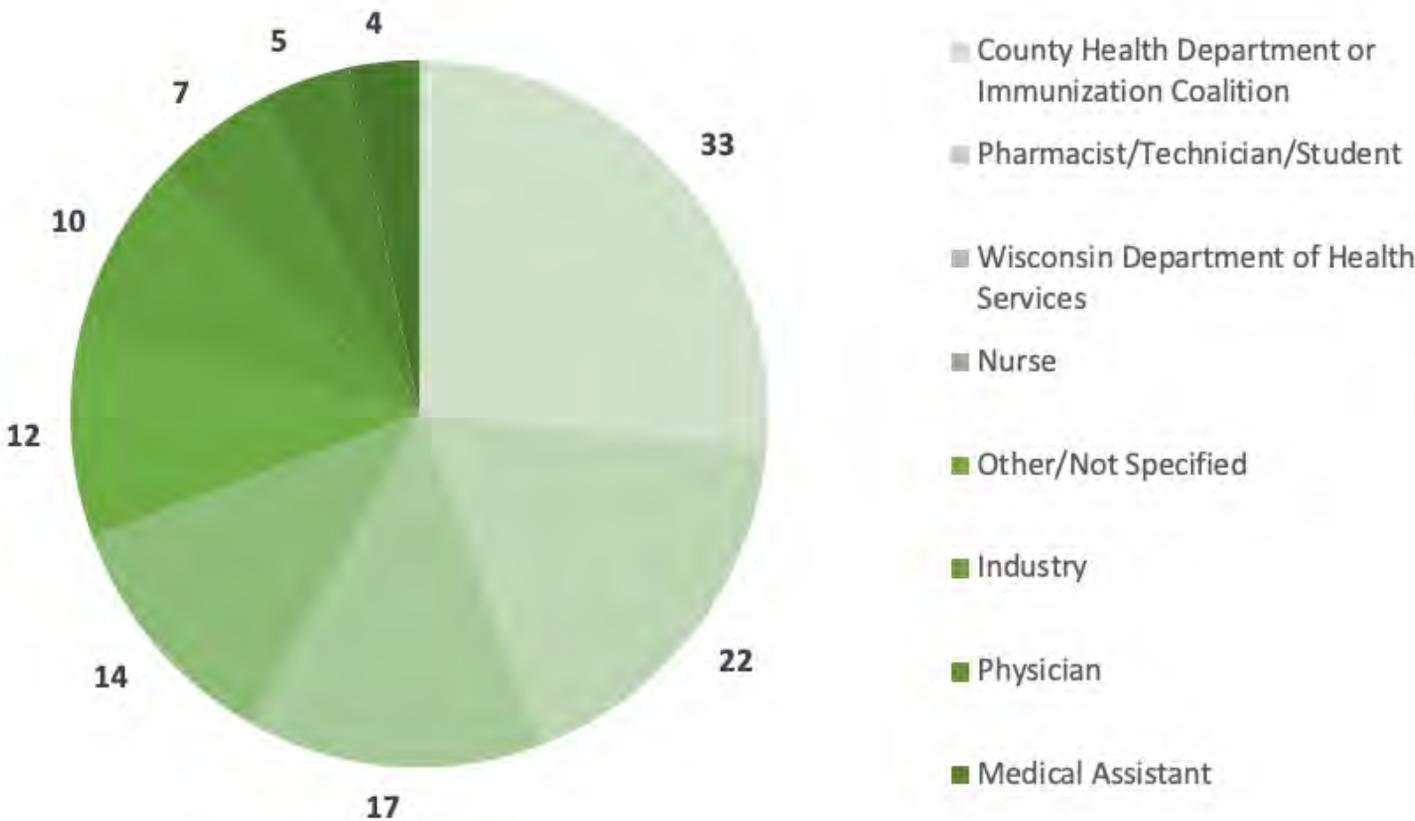
of Health Services employees, and industry representatives (Figure 1). Throughout the day, attendees gained a renewed sense of purpose to improve vaccination rates in Wisconsin by partnering with other professions and organizations.

Jonathan Temte, MD, PhD, MS opened the summit by expressing his sincere appreciation of pharmacists and pharmacies for serving as a location for patients to receive vaccines. Offering immunizations in pharmacies has increased patient access, especially in rural parts of Wisconsin. Temte then provided an

update on the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). He stated that routine childhood immunizations, during the years of 1994-2013, were estimated to have prevented around 322 million illnesses, or 4.1 illnesses per child. He concluded by thanking all attendees for their dedication and passion for expanding vaccine access.

Following the ACIP update, Sarah Sorum, PharmD, CEO and Executive Vice President of PSW, facilitated a panel discussion on expanding vaccine access through interdisciplinary partnerships. The

FIGURE 1. Attendees by Profession





IMMUNIZATION SUMMIT

Supporting Access Expansion and Vaccination Efficiency in Clinics and Communities

Wednesday, February 26, 2020
9:00 am - 4:30 pm
Glacier Canyon Lodge, Wisconsin Dells

four panelists included: Micki Feldmeier, RPh (Walgreens), Brian Stamm, MBA (Employee Trust Funds/ETF), Sarah Hughes, DNP, APHN, RN (Public Health Madison & Dane County), and Ryan Westergaard, MD, PhD, MPH (Wisconsin Department of Health Services). Each panelist shared what was at the top of their minds when considering immunization expansion. For Westergaard, he addressed the importance of understanding social determinants of health in order to identify people that may have limited vaccine access. The other panelists shared similar responses. For Feldmeier, she continues to communicate to her patients that they can receive many routine vaccines at her pharmacy. Stamm mentioned how he is working to expand the data available to ETF so they can identify patients that may have barriers to vaccine access and leverage the data to identify solutions. Hughes is seeking to increase outreach available to vulnerable populations that are currently not receiving vaccines. She highlighted the importance of going out into the community to vaccinate people where they are located instead of expecting them to come receive a vaccine. Hughes and Hillary Plumb, PharmD elaborated on school-based clinics led by the pharmacy in partnership with the local health department in an afternoon session at the summit.

The programming continued with multiple sessions that can be applied to all healthcare professionals. Rebecca Bernstein, MD, MS provided a training to help professionals expand their pediatric vaccination practices. This included a

Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR) overview presentation led by Kevin Samuelson of the Wisconsin Immunization Program at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Mary Hayney, PharmD, MPH discussed preventing administration errors. Jenny Wensink, CMA (AAMA) and Nicholas Thompson shared their best practices for increasing immunization rates at Lakeshore Community Health Care. This was done by trying to get as many vaccinations on the same day as possible, bringing up vaccines at every appointment so there are no missed opportunities, and wearing a themed purple shirt on Thursdays that says “Vaccines Save Lives” as a means to help initiate conversations.

Jim Conway, MD, provided an overview of understanding and addressing vaccine hesitancy. Conway emphasized the importance of reframing our perception of those who do not wish to be vaccinated. Vaccine hesitancy is primarily focused around parents wanting to protect their children. Parents may be more likely to have a conversation if health professionals highlight that refusing vaccinations is an active decision to subject the child to the dangers of the disease. Education of healthcare professionals is key to building trust with patients and navigating hesitancy.

As an attendee, I thought this summit was an invaluable opportunity to hear passionate members of the healthcare community come together to discuss their thoughts and experiences about vaccine access. The interprofessional nature of the event brought together unique viewpoints regarding barriers to vaccination, as well as

opportunities to overcome these barriers. As a fourth-year pharmacy student, it was beneficial to hear about the current services pharmacists are providing along with other professionals when working in the community, clinic, or hospital settings. Leaving the summit, I realized that I am interested in pursuing public health initiatives as I begin to complete a residency this coming summer. I encourage others to seek opportunities to engage in collaborative initiatives and events to increase awareness of the multitude of services pharmacy personnel provide.

Feedback from the other attendees was exceptionally positive. Attendees also enjoyed the interprofessional nature of the event and were able to build a network to share ideas moving forward. PSW is extremely grateful for the time and energy of the planning committee, presenters, and the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment for making this summit possible. PSW encourages you to keep vaccinating your patients and reach out to the PSW offices to provide insights on your immunization practices.

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