

Illinois' Immunization Registry improves to "opt-out" system

I-CARE, or Illinois Comprehensive Automated Immunization Registry Exchange, is an immunization record-sharing computer program developed by the Illinois Department of Public Health. The program allows public and private health care providers to share the immunization records of Illinois residents. Currently, the program contains more than 37 million immunization records.

Along with keeping track of the immunizations a child has already received, I-CARE forecasts immunization due dates based on the nationally recognized "Recommended Childhood Immunization Schedule." These recommendations are approved by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians. I-CARE can also be linked directly to your electronic health records system.

Legislative Victory makes I-CARE an "opt-out" system

The IAAP, in conjunction with the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Chicago Area Immunization Campaign/Illinois Maternal Child Health Coalition, worked with state representatives to draft language and advance House Bill 1338 which led to the "opt-out" system. The previous opt-in system posed an administrative burden to health care providers and required providers to track down patients and obtain a signed consent form prior to the immunization record being entered in I-CARE. Public Act 97-0117, effective July 14, 2011, established I-CARE as an "opt-out" registry, making Illinois one of 42 states that currently use an "opt-out" system.

Comprehensive information on I-CARE, including how to register, training opportunities, and I-CARE newsletters, please visit the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics website at <http://illinoisAAP.org/projects/immunizations/i-care/>

For more information on I-CARE please visit the IDPH website at <http://www.idph.state.il.us/health/vaccine/icarefs.html>