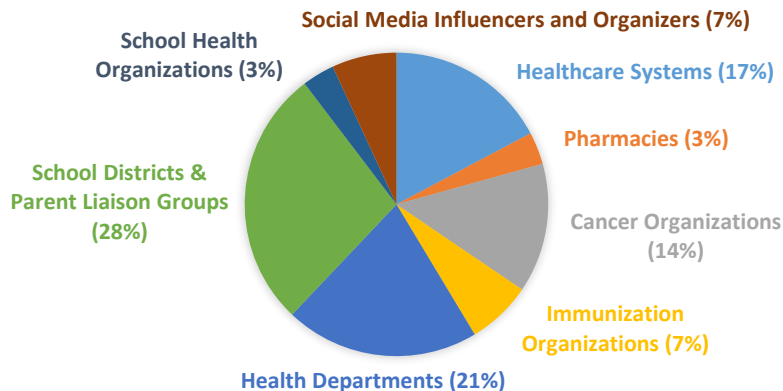


HPV “Enviroscan” Project

In 2018, we recruited 29 professionals to participate in interviews. They came from diverse backgrounds (e.g. schools, healthcare organizations, cancer organizations, etc.) from 7 counties in the Dallas-Fort Worth metro area. Our goal was to listen to their knowledge and suggestions about how to increase HPV vaccination in their communities by promoting coalitions and grassroots stakeholder engagement.

PARTICIPANTS BY PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND



7 COUNTIES



Collin
Dallas
Denton
Hunt
Rockwall
Tarrant
Wise

KEY FINDINGS



Successful coalition-building used social networks to facilitate establishment of new relationships and trust among members.

“[We make] sure that we have a really good relationship with our nurses in our area, not just in our county because they’re able to reach larger counties that maybe don’t have anybody they can talk to...There are a lot of outlying counties that don’t have a health department that need our services so they’ll send them here.” – Hunt Health Department employee



Some stakeholders reported that a more collaborative culture exists among rural organizations compared to those in Dallas.

“We have a pretty good relationship with the public schools. As far as their vaccine records, we kind of their go-to for questions. I feel like the school nurses – they know us, they trust us...There’s a really good give and take with our public school nurses. I can talk to Denton ISD, Lewisville ISD, and those are the two largest in the county.” – Denton County Public Health Department employee



Many stakeholders felt they lacked the adequate knowledge about how to combat negative vaccine stereotypes.

“We want to believe that our kids aren’t at risk because we want to think they live life differently and don’t want to admit that we have weaknesses. So for many, accepting and getting an HPV vaccine is admitting that our children will fail. But rather than looking at it like failing, you’re setting them up for success. You’re realizing we’re not perfect, and it protects your child and who they’re going to marry.” – Hunt County school nurse



Challenges included uncertainty about how to establish partnerships and a lack of resources to participate in coalitions.

“Time is difficult for [doctors] in participating in our back to school bash....They rarely have any staff where they can provide resources during an event...they’re the only doctor in town so I would say resources is a hurdle.” – Commerce Independent School District employee

HPV “Enviroscan” Project

Best practices among researchers and educators:

- Be courteous and curious, not negative or dismissive, when talking to people who are hesitant about vaccines.
- Tailor the amount and level of educational information you provide to parents and teens.
- Include “personal stories” and invite survivors to speak at educational events. Knowing someone who had HPV-related cancer or infection is the most powerful motivator for some vaccine-hesitant parents.



Best practices among healthcare providers:

- Longer-term patient-provider relationships, which are more common in suburban & rural areas, facilitate parents’ willingness to engage in vaccine conversations.
- Bundle with other recommended vaccines & frame as “here’s what you’re eligible for today,” rather than “here’s what’s required”.
- Educate front desk and nursing staff to provide accurate information.



LESSONS LEARNED

- Suburban and rural relationships and networks are close-knit. People in the health department, schools, and community organizations know one another. This facilitates their ability to access additional partners within the network and underscores the need to maintain positive relationships with existing partners.
- Misconceptions about the HPV vaccine persist, indicating **ongoing need for vaccine education**.
- Clinic and community groups are very **interested in being part of a vaccine coalition**, although none volunteered to take a leading role effort.
- Providers, clinic staff, and health system leaders are interested in **receiving education about how to counsel vaccine-hesitant parents who “push back”**.



NEXT STEPS

What Simmons Cancer Center is doing:

- **Online resources that providers and educators can distribute to educate and motivate parents**— see the “Looking Forward” app, looking-forward.org.
- Developing communications training materials to **help providers practice talking points with hesitant parents** and address misconceptions about vaccines.
- Connecting parents to free or reduced-price vaccines in their area: call 833-722-6237 or email canceranswerline@utsouthwestern.edu

What can you do?

- Mobilize with other established groups like the Texas HPV Coalition, texas HPV coalition.org
- Partner with the Office of Community Outreach, Engagement, & Equity at Simmons Cancer Center to build a DFW-area coalition. **Contact us to get started!** officeofcoee@utsouthwestern.edu