Kansas’s Immunize and Win a Prize Project Offers Practical Prizes to Promote Child Vaccination

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment Immunization Program partners with Vaccines for Children (VFC) providers to promote childhood vaccination, particularly in low-income areas, by offering practical gifts along with a drawing for a $200 utility bill payment.

The Immunize and Win a Prize project in Kansas began in 2003 with tobacco settlement money to help equalize the disparity in vaccination rates among Medicaid children, though the project expanded to cover all children who receive a vaccine at a participating VFC provider. The project encourages parents to complete each child’s primary series by age two. For each of the four primary series visits, the family receives a gift, such as a sippy cup or wet wipes. If the child completes the entire series by age two, they are entered into a grand-prize drawing and provider-specific drawings for a $200 utility bill payment.

Steps Taken:
- Immunize and Win a Prize was created in order to address vaccination disparities among Medicaid children.
- The project started out as a pilot project in 10 counties and eventually expanded to cover the entire state.
- Providers must be VFC providers in order to participate in the project at no cost. Every child who is vaccinated at a VFC provider office is eligible for the incentives.
- As the tobacco money runs out, project staff are looking for other ways to fund the program. The project was able to acquire some funding from flu preparedness by printing flu program logos on the incentives.

Results:
- There are currently 380 participating providers.
- The state Medicaid agency contracted a third-party evaluator, who concluded that rates increased from 49 percent in 2003 to 87 percent in 2010 (this increase is not fully attributable to the program).
- In some Kansas counties participating in the Immunize and Win a Prize project, immunization rates doubled between 2003 and 2010.
- To qualify for the grand prize drawing, a child must complete their primary series by age two (4 DTap, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hib, 3 HepB, 1 Varicella, 4 PCV).

Lessons Learned:
- Incentives were structured so that there was both an instant reward but also an incentive to come back and complete the primary series.
- This project offers an incentive for providers to join the VFC program, as participation is limited to VFC providers.
- Initially, only Medicaid children could participate in the project. However, this created tension between Medicaid and non-Medicaid parents, so the project was expanded to include all patients at a participating provider.
State Story

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