



Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Public Health Council Meeting August 14, 2024

Robert Goldstein, Commissioner

Today's presentation is available on mass.gov/dph under "Upcoming Events" by clicking on the August 14 Public Health Council listing.



Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Public Health Council Meeting August 14, 2024

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Mosquitoes and Ticks



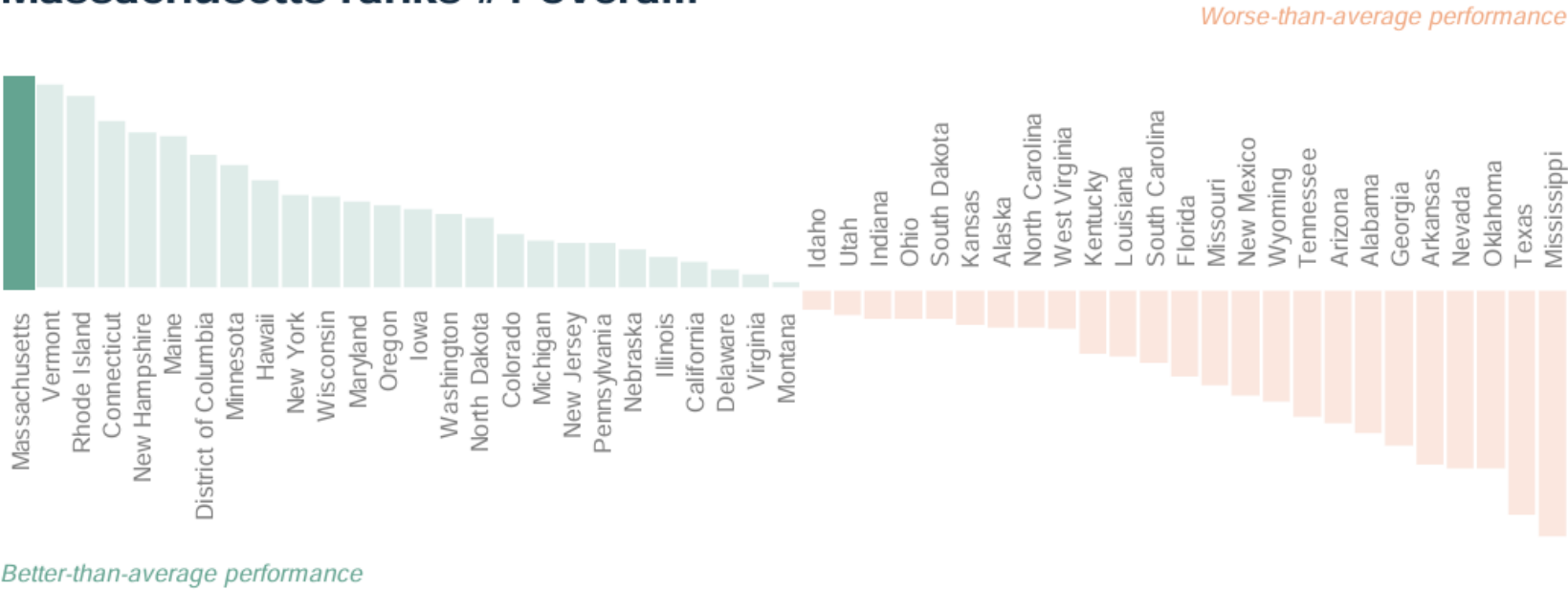
mass.gov/MosquitoesAndTicks

Commonwealth Fund Scorecard

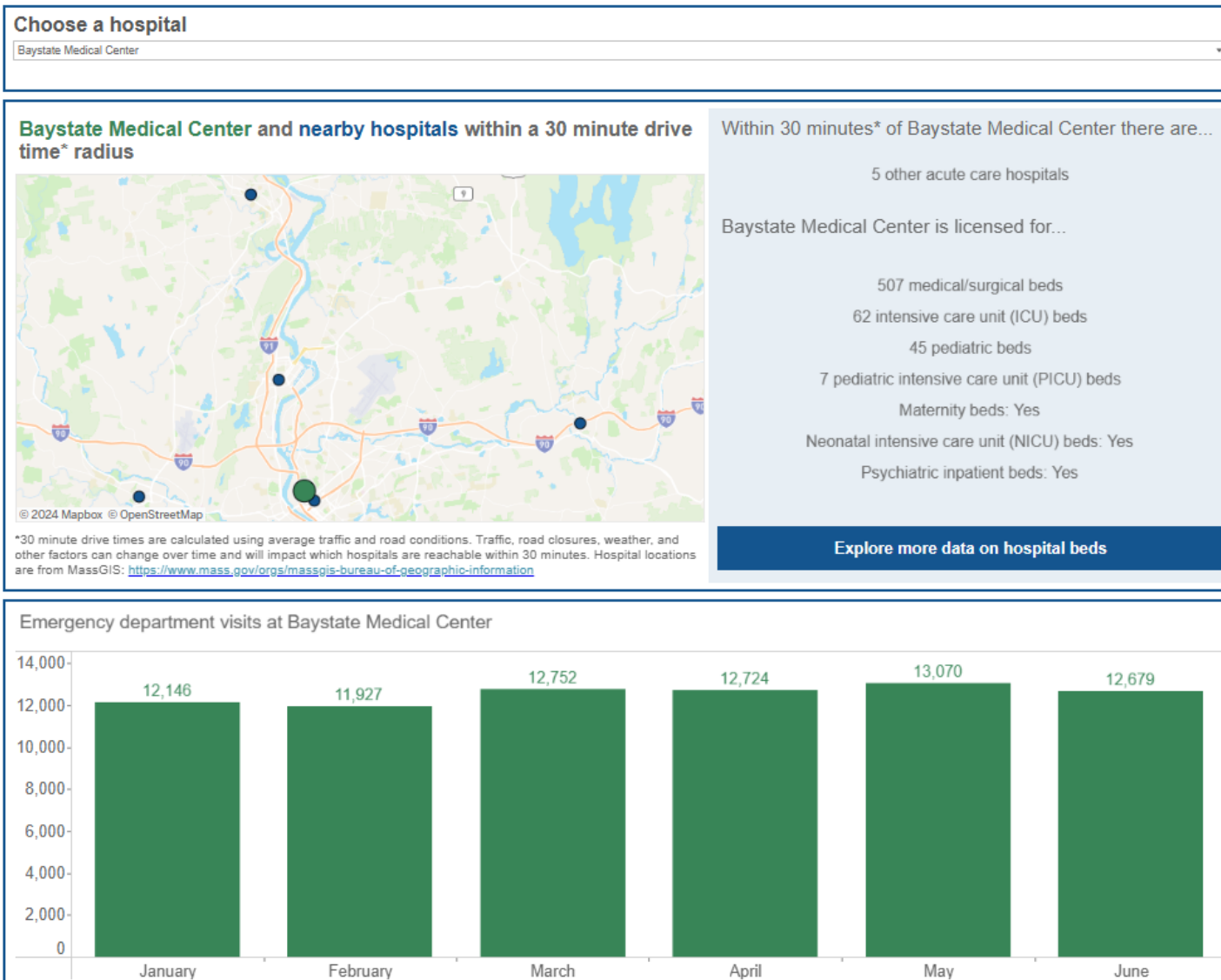
Commonwealth Fund 2024 State Scorecard on Women’s Health and Reproductive Care

How well is the health care system in
Massachusetts
working for women?

Massachusetts ranks #1 overall.

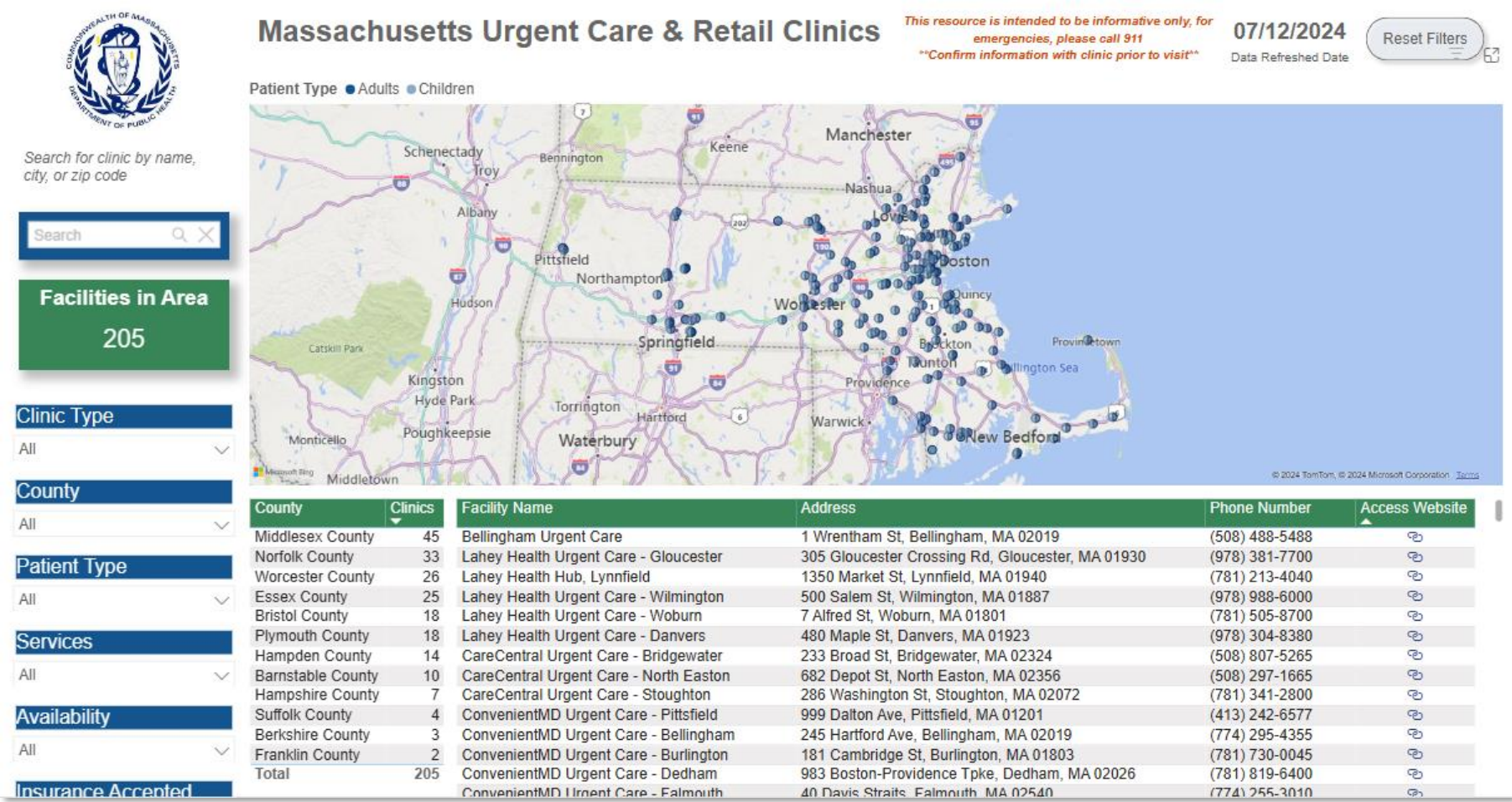


Health Care Capacity Dashboard



[mass.gov/info-
details/health-care-
capacity-interactive-
dashboard](https://mass.gov/info-details/health-care-capacity-interactive-dashboard)

Urgent Care Dashboard



mass.gov/info-details/urgent-care-and-retail-clinics-in-massachusetts



Massachusetts Department of Public Health

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Emergency Assistance Changes

PRESS RELEASE

Healey-Driscoll Administration Announces Changes to Emergency Assistance Prioritization, Safety-Net Sites

Safety-net sites to become temporary respite centers with five-day stay limit

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

7/23/2024

Governor Maura Healey and Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll



Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Connecting Massachusetts Students to Behavioral Health Services:

The Impact of the School Health Services Line (4590-0250)

Avery Brien, MPP

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Director, School Health Services, BCHAP

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Director, School Based Health Center Program, BCHAP

Learning Objectives



Learn about how DPH's school health services program supports school nurses



Review the role of school-based health centers and their collaboration with school nurses



Understand the role of the school health line in providing school-based behavioral health services



Discuss how our work intersects with the statewide behavioral health roadmap

Connecting MA Students to Behavioral Health Services

DPH's BCHAP is expanding access to needed mental health and substance use services to students across the Commonwealth through the state's school health services line (4590-0250).

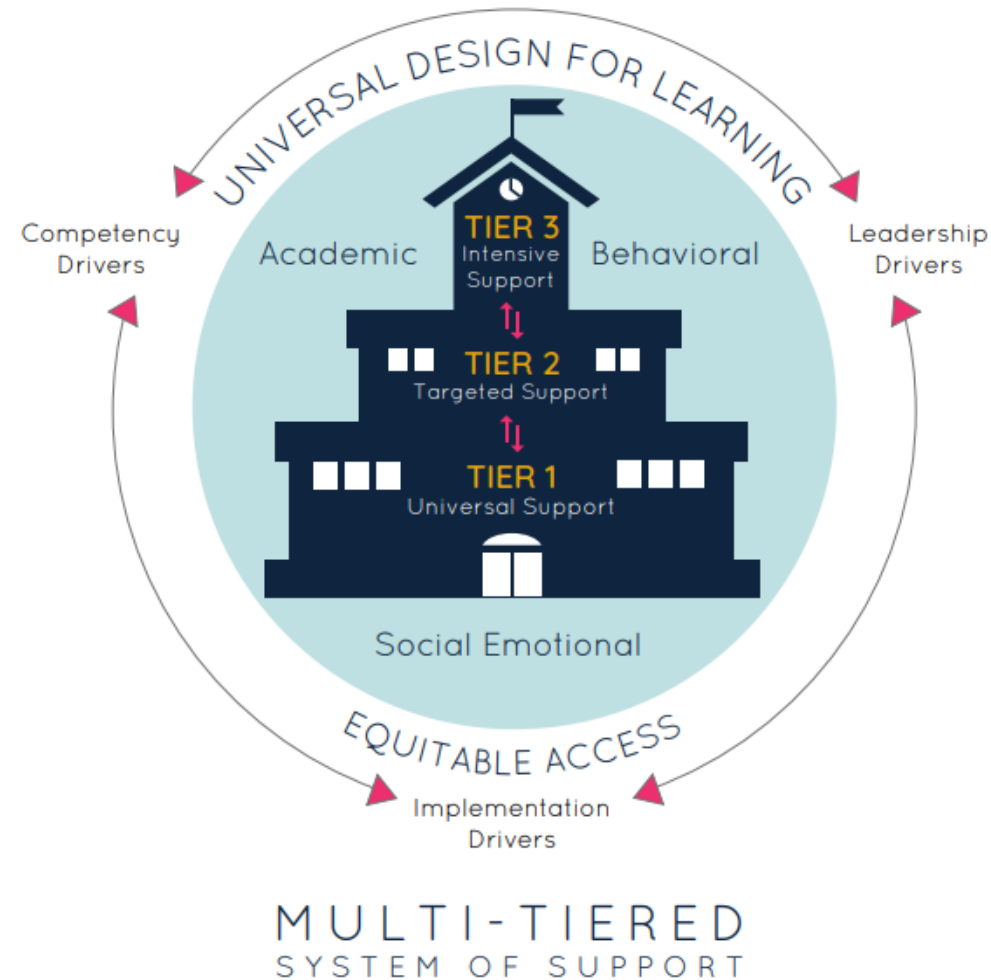
These initiatives fund:

- Schools (includes vocational, Chapter 766, and collaboratives)
- School districts
- School-based health centers (funded through community health centers, hospitals, public health agencies)

They allow these entities to:

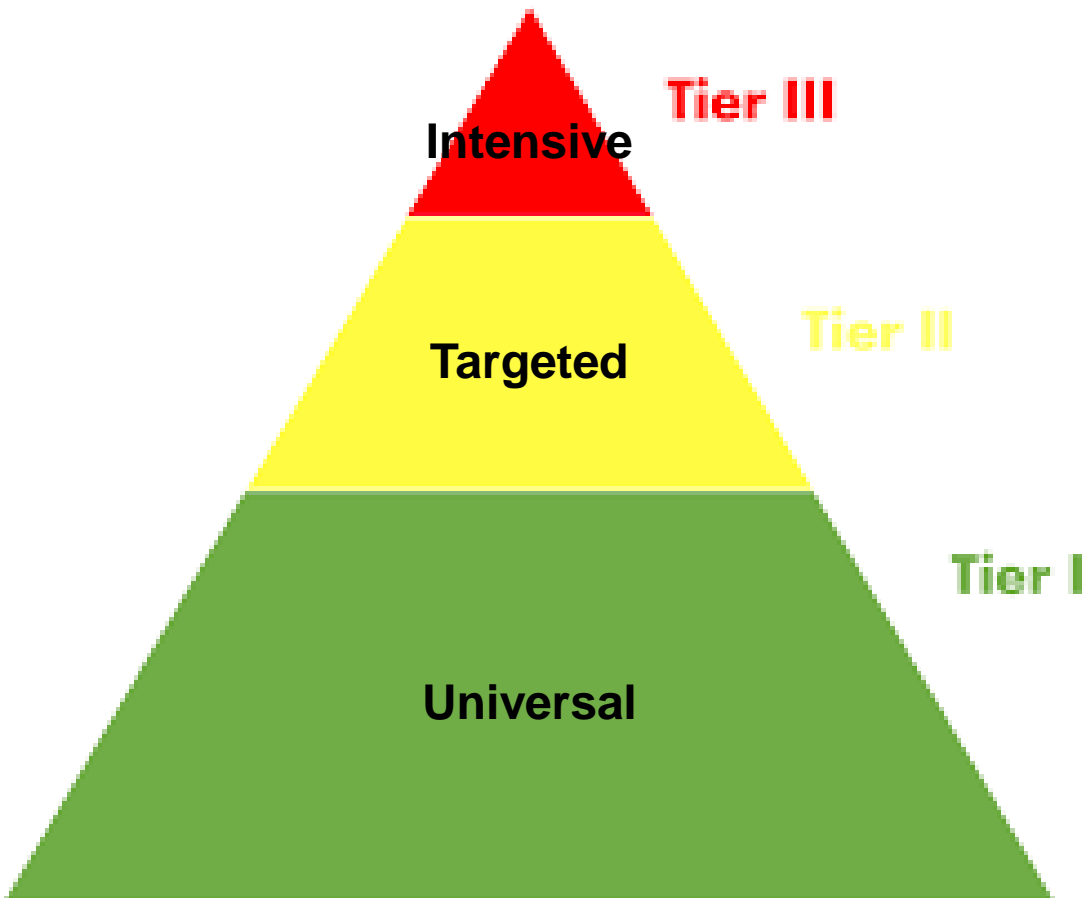
- Hire additional behavioral health staff
- Build partnerships between schools and community-based providers
- Train the school health workforce to respond to youth behavioral health needs

Supporting School Multi-Tiered Systems of Support



To learn more about the MTSS framework, visit DESE's website: [Multi-Tiered System of Support \(MTSS\) - Systems for Student Success Office \(mass.edu\)](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/multi-tiered-system-of-support-mtss-systems-for-student-success-office)

Supporting School Multi-Tiered Systems of Support



- Crisis intervention and de-escalation
- School-based bridge programs (e.g., bryt)
- Referrals to intensive treatment and community-based care
- Assessment and diagnosis
- Individualized therapy and comprehensive management
- Medication prescription and administration
- Continuous monitoring and case management

- Focused individual and group therapy
- Substance use education and alternatives to discipline

- Social Emotional Learning
- Mental Health and Substance Use Screening (e.g., SBIRT)
- Routine Screenings, Sports Physicals and/or Vaccinations
- Preventive programming (e.g., school-wide health campaigns + school climate initiatives)
- Resiliency building opportunities (e.g., youth advisory councils)

The School Health Services Program

- Supports all public school districts and non-public schools and their nurses
- Promotes a [whole-child/whole-family approach](#) through nurse-managed care
- Supports the implementation of school-based substance use Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)
- Provides professional development to support school nurses in responding to student behavioral health needs and coordinating necessary referrals
- Provides funding to 188 schools and districts through the Comprehensive School Health Services (CSHS) grant

The School Health Services Program: Training and PD

- Boston University's School Health Institute for Education and Leadership and Development (BU SHIELD) Mental Health Series, addressing:
 - School Re-Entry
 - Impact of Trauma on the Body, Brain, and Behavior
 - The MTSS Framework and Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems
 - Cultivating Regulation and Resilience Amid Ongoing Uncertainties and Inequities
 - Supporting LGBTQI Youth
 - Psychopharmacology
 - Experiences of Youth with Behavioral and Emotional Needs



The School Health Services Program: SBIRT

- Supports the implementation of school-based substance use Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT).
 - In 2016, the Legislature enacted a law requiring public schools to conduct annual screenings of students for substance use disorder (An Act Relative To Substance Use, Treatment, Education And Prevention). The law requires that schools use a verbal screening tool and administer the screening to students in two grade levels.
- Provides professional development to support school nurses and other school health professionals in training and implementation of SBIRT through BU SHIELD.



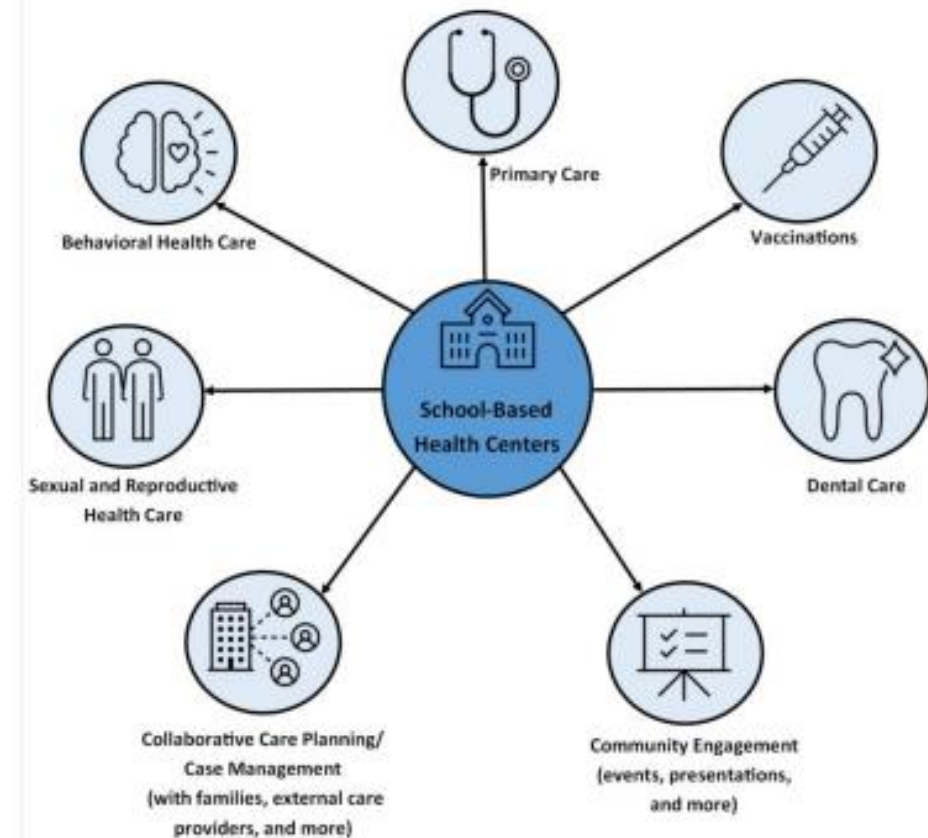
The School Health Services Program: CSHS

- Provides funding to 188 schools and districts through the Comprehensive School Health Services (CSHS) grant to support schools in meeting increasing student and family health needs, including social determinants of health.
- Scope of services for grantees includes:
 - “Bridge” or “BRYT” program for students returning to academics after an extended absence
 - Post-hospitalization and/or rehabilitation
 - Substance use recovery program
 - Health education at the PreK-12 level
 - Addresses all aspects of health using trauma- and resilience-informed approaches
 - Tri-annual community health needs assessment
 - Addresses health inequities and the impact of institutional racism and socioeconomic disparities on students
 - Case management for students with chronic health conditions
 - Supports safe school attendance

The School-Based Health Center Program

What are School-Based Health Centers?

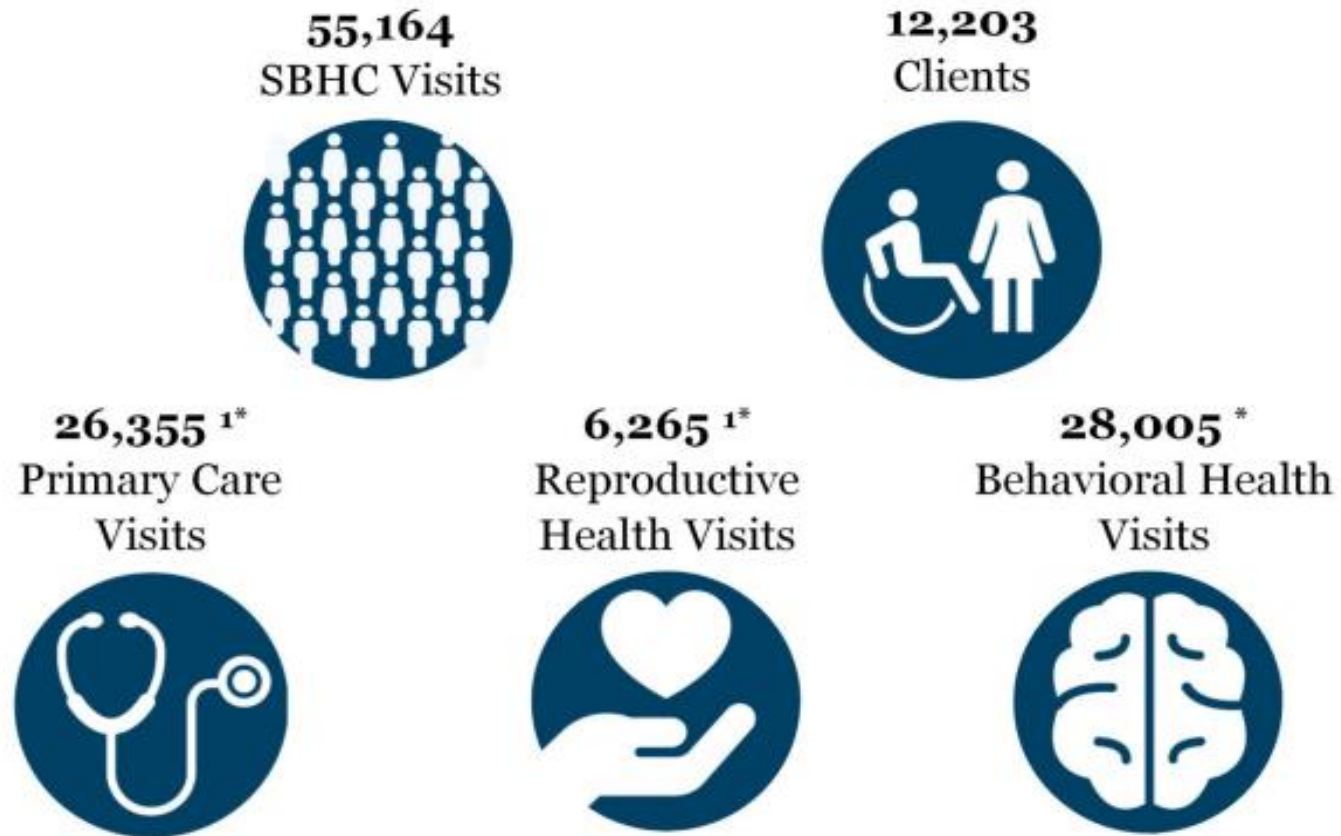
- School-Based Health Centers are satellite clinics of Community Health Centers and Hospitals that are located within schools
- School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) offer a variety of health care services, including primary, behavioral health, and community health care



The School-Based Health Center Program

- DPH-funded SBHCs are required to staff a full-time behavioral health clinician, a full-time medical provider, and full-time community health worker ([see website](#) for more information).
- DPH funds 19 sponsoring agencies (community health centers and hospitals) that support 41 SBHCs across the Commonwealth ([see directory](#) for more information).
- The DPH SBHC Program prioritizes funding to School-Based Health Centers that improve access to care for children and adolescents in schools and communities where access to care is low and health inequities are high.
- The DPH SBHC Program's technical assistance opportunities are open to the statewide network.

The School-Based Health Center Program



The visits above include all clients who were seen at the SBHC, regardless of age or enrollment status. While most clients are K-12 students, some are community members.

* Visit count categories are based on the Primary International Classification of Diseases (ICD) Code assigned to the visit by the SBHC.

¹ Primary Care Visits include Reproductive Health Visits.

The School Behavioral Health Service and Workforce Expansion Program

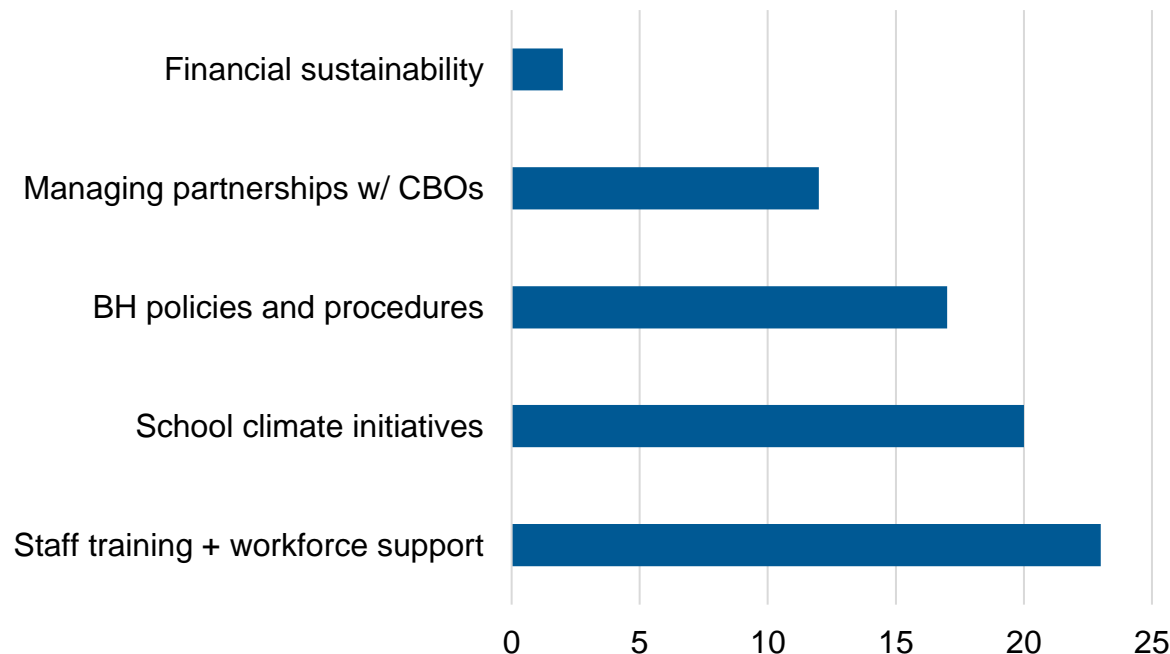
- Provides funding to 33 school districts to hire and retain clinical and non-clinical behavioral health personnel
- Supports partnerships between schools and community-based providers
- Expands individual and group therapy, social emotional learning, de-escalation and crisis response, and behavioral health promotion, prevention, and early intervention

The School Behavioral Health Service and Workforce Expansion Program

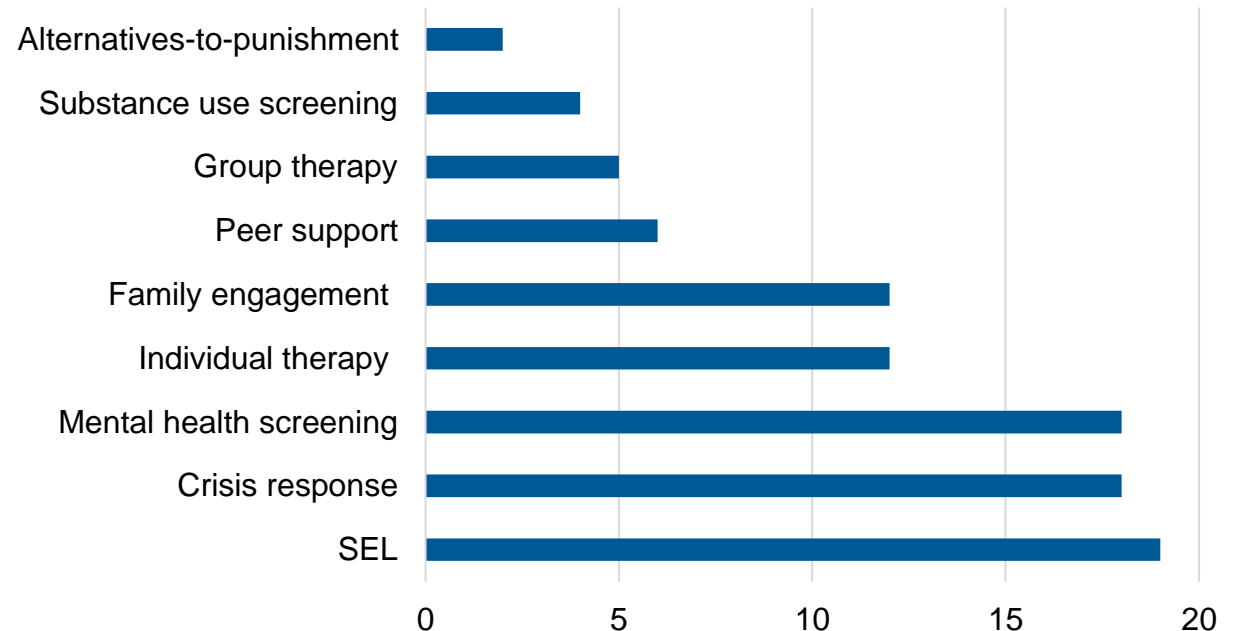
In FY23, SBHE-funded schools:

- Hired 23 new behavioral health providers
- Established 9 new contracts with community-based providers

Districts Reporting Other Activities



Districts Reporting Expanded Services



Collaboration with the Behavioral Health Roadmap

- School nurses and school behavioral health providers can use the Behavioral Health Help Line to identify referral opportunities that work for student insurance
- School providers can also make direct referrals to CBHCs
- Schools can utilize Youth Mobile Crisis Intervention to support de-escalation and crisis response

Collaboration with the Behavioral Health Roadmap

- DPH collaborated with regional Community Behavioral Health Centers, MassHealth, the Department of Mental Health, and the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership to provide school nurses and school-based health center providers an overview of services available through the BH Roadmap
- DPH developed a resource to clarify insurance requirements for BH Roadmap services for school nurses and school-based health centers
- DPH worked with DESE to update the MBHERP guidance and included a focus on BH Roadmap resources
- Worked with DMH to issue a survey to better understand how school nurses are utilizing the BHHL

Thank you for the opportunity to present this information today.

Please direct any questions to:

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Manager, Behavioral Health Initiatives

Bureau of Community Health and Prevention

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National Immunization Awareness Month

National Immunization Awareness Month

#Ivax2Protect



Image courtesy of CDC

cdc.gov/vaccines
mass.gov/topics/immunization



Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Massachusetts Healthcare Personnel COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccination in Health Care Facilities and Emergency Medical Services

2023-2024 Season

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Director of the Office of Health Care Strategy and Planning

Fareesa Hasan, MPH, MS

Epidemiologist

Eileen McHale, RN, BSN

Healthcare Associated Infection Coordinator

Background

- Health care personnel (HCP) are at high risk for influenza (flu) and coronavirus (COVID-19) exposure and illness and may be a source of viral transmission in health care settings.
- Annual immunization decreases the risk of flu and COVID-19 and is the best method of preventing serious complications.*
- The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) considers the prevention of flu and COVID-19 by promoting vaccination an organizational priority that should be part of the overall institutional commitment to improvement for licensed health care facilities and emergency medical services.

* [cdc.gov/flu/prevent/keyfacts.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/keyfacts.htm); [cdc.gov/covid/vaccines/benefits.html](https://www.cdc.gov/covid/vaccines/benefits.html)

Background

As a condition of licensure*, current DPH regulations require health care facilities and providers, including hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, dialysis centers, clinics, nursing homes, rest homes, hospice programs, emergency medical services and adult day health programs, to:

- Ensure all HCP are vaccinated annually with annual influenza vaccine and are up to date with vaccine doses for COVID-19 as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), unless an individual is exempt from vaccination
- Notify HCP about the requirements and educate them about the benefits and risks of these vaccines
- At no cost to the HCP provide or arrange for vaccination of all personnel who cannot provide proof of current vaccination unless an individual is exempt
- Report information to DPH documenting each facility's compliance with the HCP vaccination requirements

*105 CMR 130.325 and 130.326, 105 CMR 140.150, 105 CMR 141.201(D), 105 CMR 150.002(D)(8) and 150.008(D)(11), 105 CMR 158.030(L) and 158.030(M), 105 CMR 170.341 and 170.342

Performance Goal

To protect the lives and welfare of patients, employees, and communities, as well as to improve quality and reduce healthcare costs, **DPH has established an overall minimum vaccination rate of 90% or greater for eligible HCP at all licensed health care facilities.**

This performance goal is intended to advance patient and HCP health and safety by ensuring optimal HCP vaccination coverage and was originally established based on the National Healthy People 2020 target of achieving 90% influenza coverage of HCP.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends that HCP receive an annual influenza and COVID-19 vaccination to reduce influenza related morbidity and mortality among HCP and their patients as well as reduce absenteeism among HCP.

healthypeople.gov/node/4668/data_details

Methodology

Health care facilities report HCP flu and COVID-19 vaccination rates to DPH in one of three ways:

1. **National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):** Acute care hospitals, non-acute hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, dialysis centers, and nursing homes
2. **Health Care Facility Reporting System (HCFRS):** Rest homes and adult day health programs
3. **Online survey:** EMS, Clinics and hospice programs

This was the first year that hospice programs and emergency medical services (EMS) were required to submit vaccination reports. DPH aligned state reporting with federal requirements where possible.

Reporting Requirements

- DPH determined reporting periods and deadlines based upon federal requirements for each vaccine type.
- All providers were required to submit the total number of HCP that worked onsite at least one day, the total number of HCP vaccinated, and the total number of HCP who claimed an exemption within the defined reporting period.

HCP Vaccination Metric	Reporting Period
Up-to-date for COVID-19 vaccine	October 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023
Received annual flu vaccine	October 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024

Measures and Calculations

Percentage of HCP vaccinated in each season for each provider

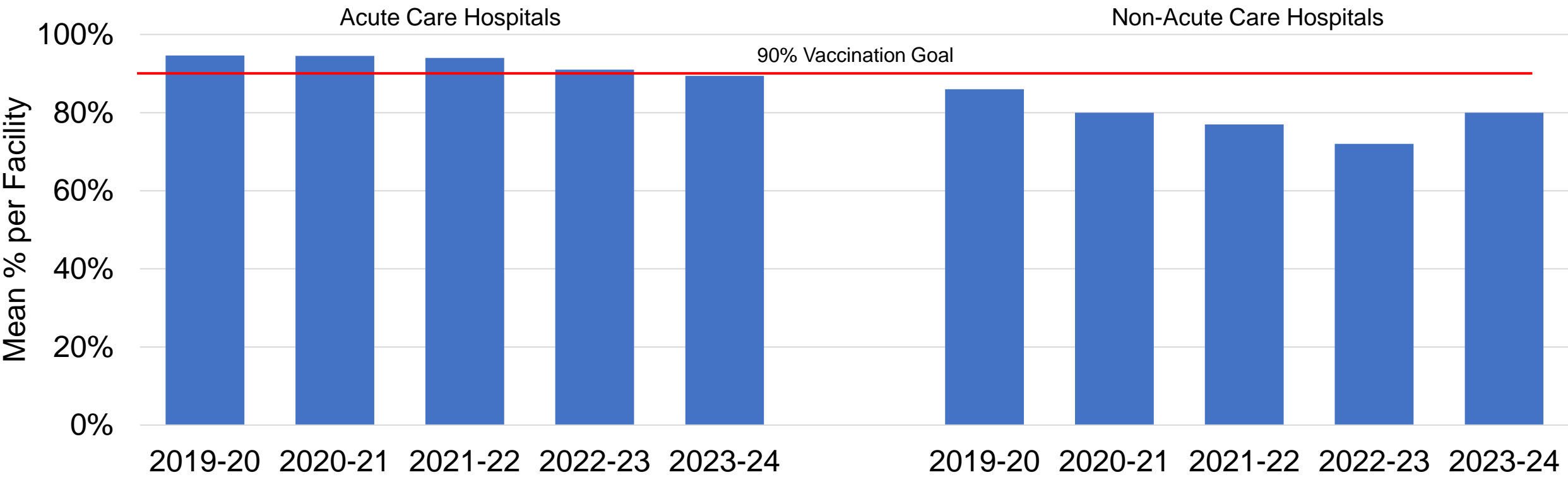
$$\text{Flu Vaccine Coverage} = \frac{\text{Total HCP Who Received an Annual Flu Vaccine}}{\text{Total \# HCP at Facility}}$$

$$\text{COVID-19 Vaccine Coverage} = \frac{\text{Total HCP Considered "Up-to-date" on COVID-19}}{\text{Total \# HCP at Facility}}$$

5-Year Flu Vaccination Trends: Hospitals

Season 2023-2024	Mean Flu Vaccinated %
Acute Care Hospitals	89.4%
Non-Acute Care Hospitals	80.0%

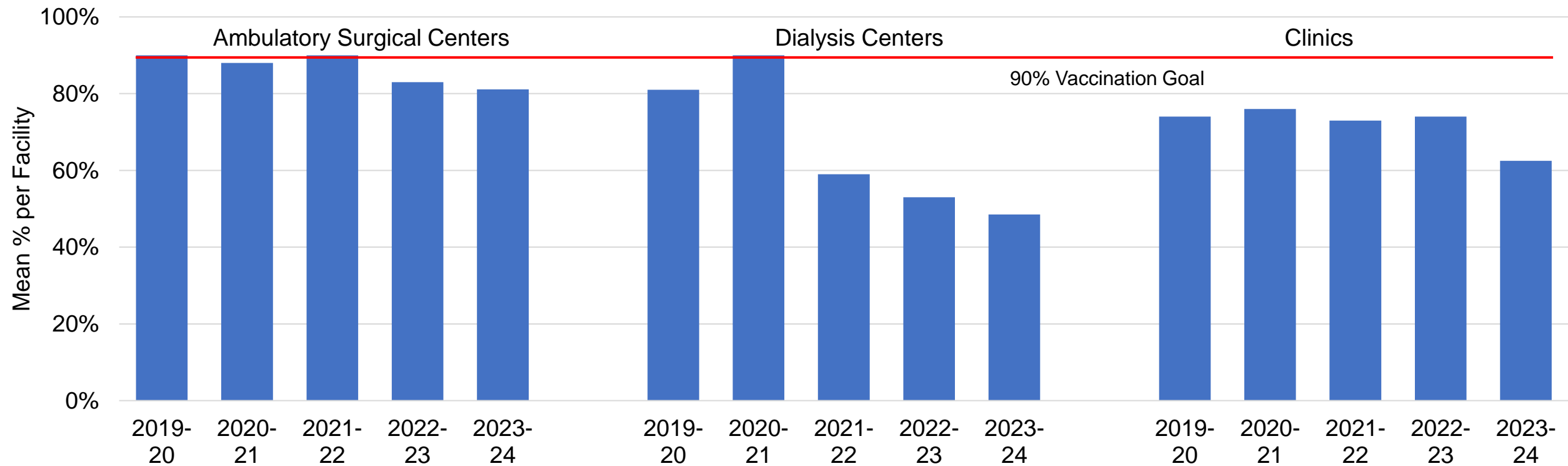
Mean Flu Vaccination Rates for Acute and Non-Acute Care Hospitals



5-Year Flu Vaccination Trends: Ambulatory Surgical Centers (ASC), Dialysis Centers, and Clinics

Season 2023-2024	Mean Flu Vaccinated %
Ambulatory Surgical Centers	81.1%
Dialysis Centers	48.5%
Clinics	51.3%

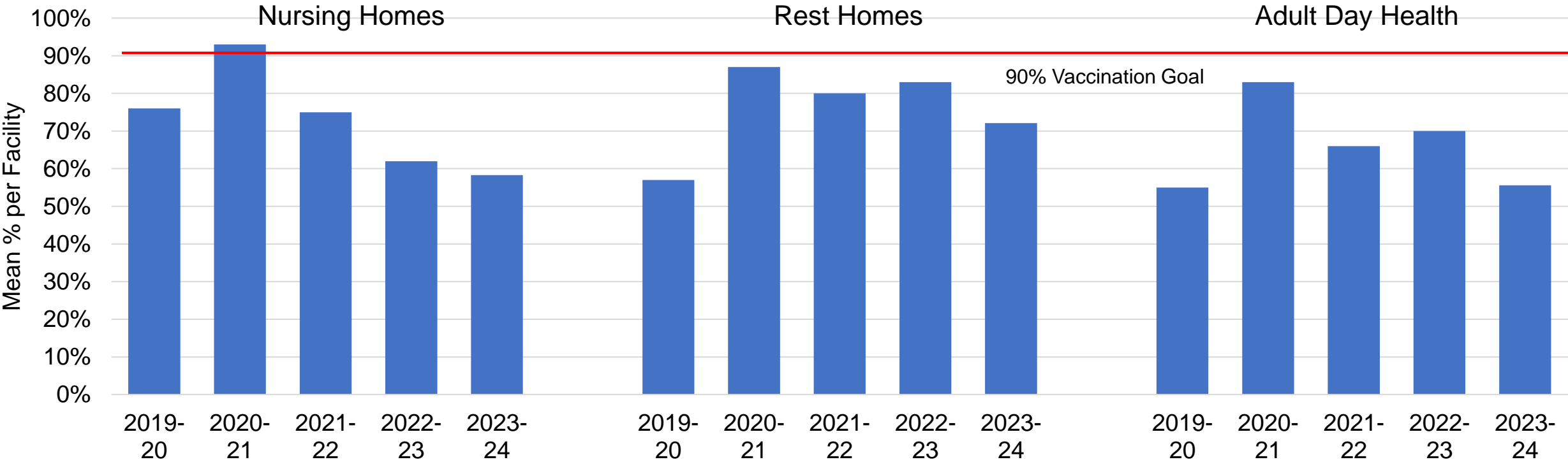
Mean Flu Vaccination Rates for ASCs, Dialysis Centers, and Clinics



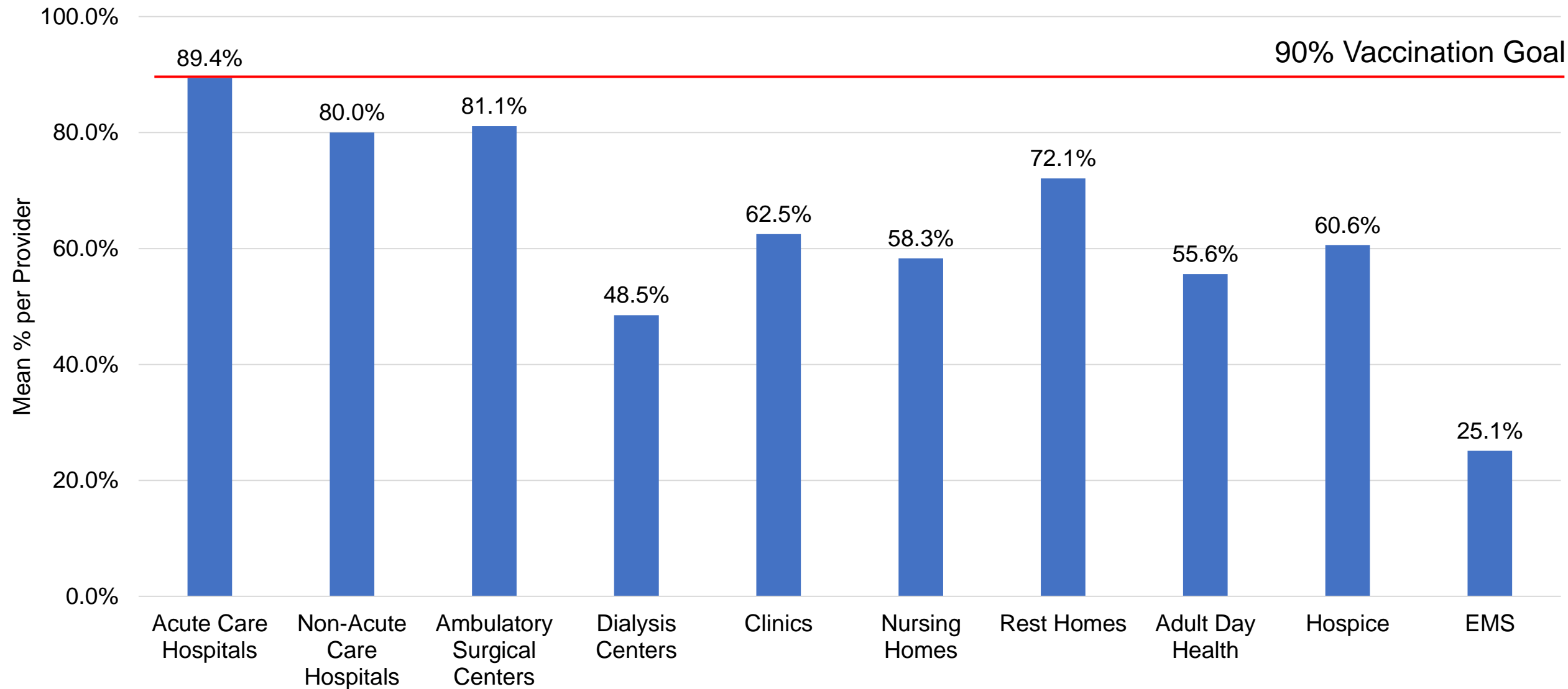
5-Year Flu Vaccination Trends: Nursing Homes, Rest Homes, and Adult Day Health Centers

Season 2023-2024	Mean Flu Vaccinated %
Nursing Homes	58.3%
Rest Homes	68.7%
Adult Day Health	53.1%

Mean Flu Vaccination Rates for Nursing Homes, Rest Homes, Adult Day Health Centers, Hospice



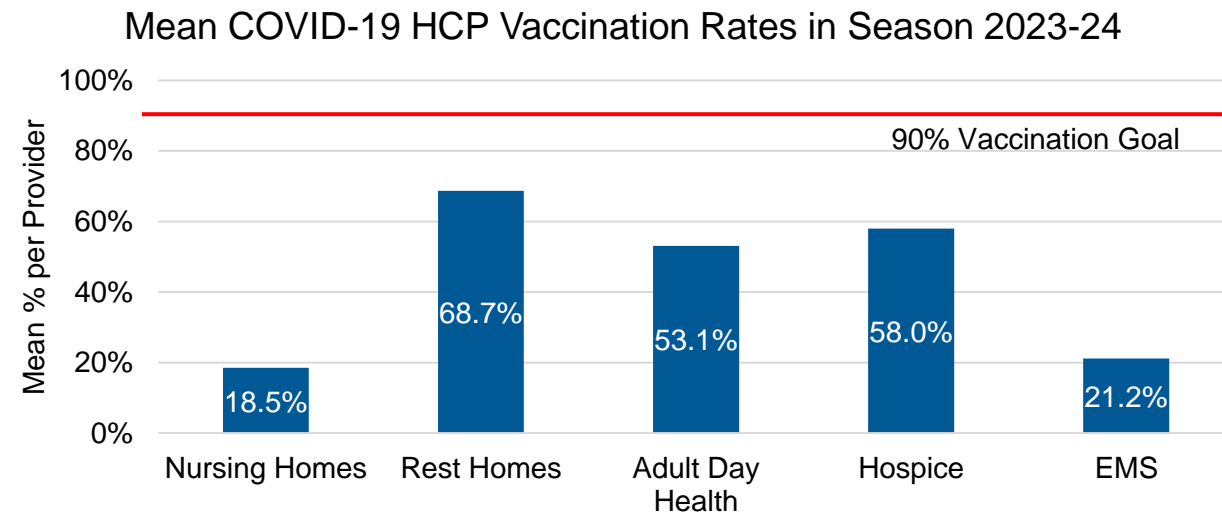
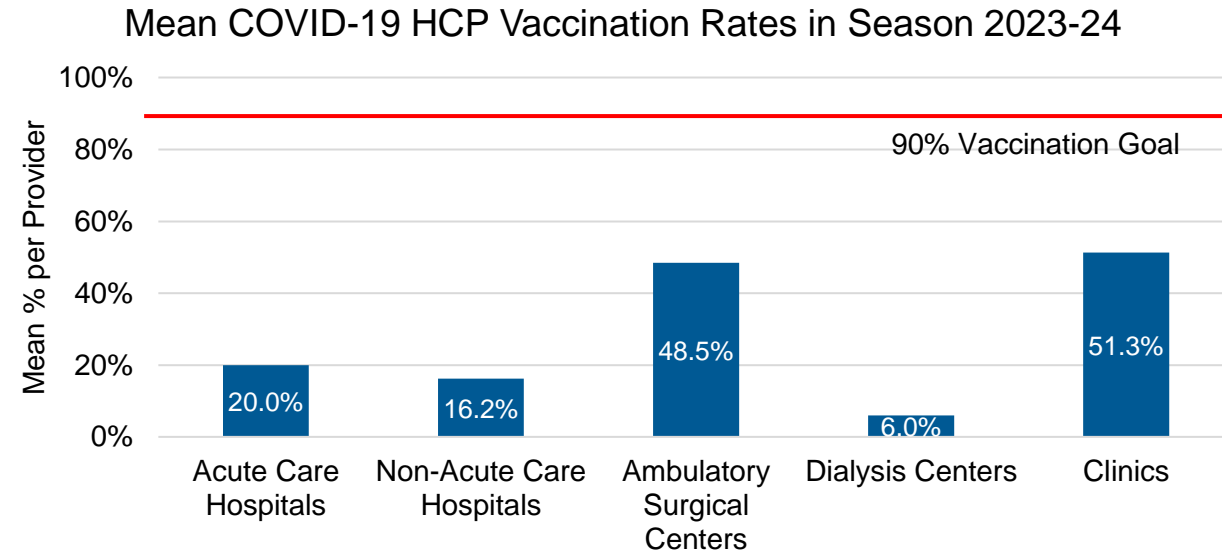
Mean HCP Flu Vaccination Rate for 2023-24 by Provider



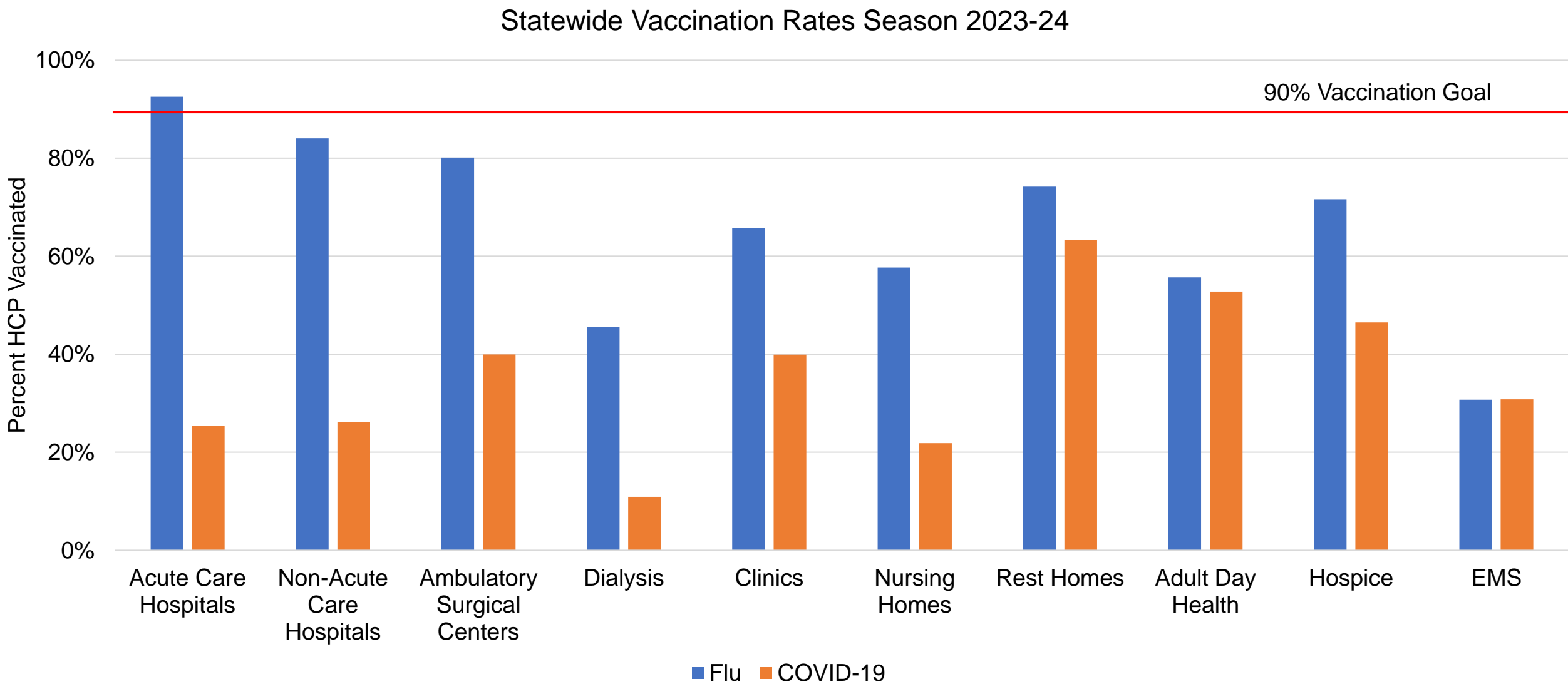
COVID-19 Vaccination 2023-24

- Uptake of the most up-to-date COVID-19 vaccine was low in the 2023-24 respiratory disease season.
- Rest homes had the highest average rate of vaccination for COVID-19 (69%)
- Dialysis Centers had the lowest average vaccination rate (6%)
- Many facilities reported the majority of their HCP as “Unknown” in federal reporting. DPH regulations require vaccination status to be documented for all HCP.

Provider Type	COVID-19 Vaccinated %
Rest Homes	68.7%
Hospice	58.0%
Adult Day Health	53.1%
Clinics	51.3%
Ambulatory Surgical Centers	48.5%
EMS	21.2%
Acute Care Hospitals	20.2%
Nursing Homes	18.5%
Non-Acute Care Hospitals	16.2%
Dialysis Centers	6.0%



Statewide HCP Vaccination Rates by Facility Type



Conclusions

- Only one provider type, Acute Care Hospitals, has reached the 90% goal for HCP flu vaccination coverage.
- Rest homes are leading in ensuring HCP are up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccination. No provider type has reached the 90% goal for HCP COVID-19 vaccination coverage.
- Many facilities are reporting HCP as having unknown vaccination status for COVID-19, potentially underrepresenting the true vaccination rate
- Early respiratory virus season availability of vaccine, prompt reporting deadlines, and changes in definitions to be considered up-to-date may have contributed to low reported vaccination rates.

Next Steps

- **DPH strongly recommends all HCP are vaccinated against flu and COVID-19 in September 2024.**
- DPH will update state data collection tools, trainings, and supporting documentation in alignment with new regulations and recommendations for vaccinations against flu and COVID-19 for the 2024-2025 respiratory virus season.
- DPH will continue hosting webinars to provide updated information for each respiratory virus season. The first is scheduled for September 24, 2024.
 - Topics to include information on National and Massachusetts infection activity, best practices to promote HCP vaccination, and guidance on data submission.
- DPH will continue promotion of continuous quality improvement by recommending licensed facilities and emergency medical services share vaccination rates with all staff, including administrators, boards of directors, practice managers, ombudspersons and patient/family councils.

Next Steps (continued)

- DPH will continue to provide useful resources, educational materials, strategies, and interventions to promote increasing vaccination coverage among HCP.
- DPH will continue distribution of job aids to assist clinics, adult day health centers, and rest homes in tracking and monitoring HCP vaccination progress.
- DPH will share this update with all licensed health care facilities and emergency medical services with recommendations to distribute broadly within each facility and to use the reported data to drive improvement.
- This update and facility specific results will be available on the DPH website: mass.gov/info-details/health-care-personnel-covid-influenza-vaccination-references-and-resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this information today.

Please direct any questions to:

dhcq.fludata@mass.gov

Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality
Office of Health Care Strategy and Planning



Massachusetts Department of Public Health

**Next Meeting:
September 11, 2024**