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5-Year Strategic Plan

FY26 – FY30

Alaska's Statewide Immunization Coalition

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Executive Summary

Alaska's Statewide Immunization Coalition's 5-Year Strategic Plan (FY26–FY30) sets a path to improve immunization access, trust, and community health across Alaska. Guided by the coalition's vision to [insert vision statement] and mission to [insert mission statement], this plan reflects the collaborative input from a diverse range of coalition members, this plan outlines priority areas and strategies to address vaccine hesitancy, enhance access, and promote a culture of wellness.

With a focus on equitable access, data modernization, and supportive environments for providers, the coalition is committed to ensuring all Alaskans can confidently protect themselves and their communities through immunization. The coalition's aim centers on bridging gaps, building trust, and empowering Alaskans to make informed, health-positive decisions.

As the coalition transitions into the implementation phase, five priority areas of focus will serve as a roadmap:

- Build Trust
- Vaccine Positive Environment for Clinical Staff
- Equitable Access
- Data Modernization
- Increasing Immunization Rates

Introduction

Who is Alaska's Statewide Immunization Coalition?

Alaska's Statewide Immunization Coalition is a collaborative, growing network of healthcare providers, Tribal and regional health organizations, public health experts, state and local health departments, educational institutions, industry and corporate partners, and community advocates united by a common goal: to increase immunization rates and reduce the burden of vaccine-preventable diseases across Alaska. Leveraging diverse backgrounds and areas of expertise, the coalition works to promote informed choices, ensure equitable access to vaccines, and advocate for policies that strengthen community health. By providing resources, fostering connections, and leading educational initiatives, the coalition serves as a trusted voice for immunization in Alaska. This plan is a first step to growing the coalition and to support members and partners who represent its interests.

Why is this plan needed?

This plan addresses Alaska's need to improve immunization rates amid rising vaccine hesitancy and decreasing vaccination coverage. Low rates of immunization, especially among Alaska's children, and challenges in vaccine access in rural and remote communities highlight the need for coordinated action. As misinformation and vaccine skepticism grow, a structured, collaborative approach is essential to foster public trust and increase access. This strategic plan provides a framework for overcoming barriers, reaching underserved populations, and building a resilient, informed, and vaccine-positive environment across the state.

Where have we been?

Over the past decade, Alaska's immunization efforts have experienced both progress and setbacks. The state's previous immunization coalition, the Vaccinate Alaska Coalition, was an established 501(c)(3) and worked on a variety of campaigns. This coalition was particularly impactful with the "I Did It By Two!" campaign, which promoted timely vaccination for young children and raised awareness about the importance of immunization. However, the coalition ultimately phased out, leaving a gap in coordinated statewide immunization efforts. The COVID-19 pandemic further underscored the importance of vaccination while introducing new challenges, including a rise in vaccine hesitancy. Additionally, historical gaps in vaccination rates and access—particularly in rural communities—have persisted. This plan builds on past lessons, drawing insights from both the successes and challenges of previous initiatives and recent pandemic responses, with a renewed focus on closing health equity gaps within Alaska's unique public health landscape.

Why focus on immunization?

Immunization is one of the most effective tools for preventing disease and protecting public health. Vaccines not only safeguard individuals but also contribute to community health by reducing the spread of infectious diseases. Immunization plays a vital role in mitigating preventable disease outbreaks. Focusing on immunization helps ensure that all Alaskans—especially those in vulnerable and remote communities—have the opportunity to live healthier lives, free from the burden of vaccine-preventable diseases.

How was the plan developed?

The coalition's strategic plan was developed through a robust planning process facilitated by Denali Daniels + Associates (DDA), contracted by the Alaska Department of Health's Immunization Program, to support building a new statewide immunization coalition.

This strategic plan development process was collaborative and informed by engaging a variety of voices across Alaska. During an October 2024 strategic planning session in Anchorage, coalition members gathered for a full-day workshop to develop the foundation of this plan. Participants collaborated to draft options for the coalition's vision, mission, and core value statements, as well as to identify key priority areas for focus. The session provided an opportunity for members to share insights, explore strategic opportunities, and set a direction for the coalition's work.

This plan represents the culmination of those efforts, with ongoing feedback being solicited from all coalition members. The finalized vision, mission, and core values, along with a clear roadmap for the coalition's strategic priorities, will be confirmed at a January 2025 meeting, ensuring alignment and collective ownership of the coalition's direction.

What are our strengths?

- Statewide data and technology
Access to comprehensive statewide data and advanced technology enables the coalition to make informed decisions and monitor immunization trends across Alaska effectively.
- Variety of backgrounds
The coalition is enriched by members from diverse professional and personal backgrounds, bringing a wide range of expertise and perspectives to our work.
- Geographic representation
With representation from communities across Alaska, the coalition can address region-specific needs and challenges, ensuring that our efforts are inclusive and responsive.
- Tribal health voices
The inclusion of Tribal health voices ensures that our strategies are culturally respectful and tailored to meet the unique needs of Alaska Native communities.
- Support and resources
Strong networks of support and access to resources empower the coalition to implement impactful immunization initiatives across the state.

- Pandemic insight
Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic have provided valuable insights into the processes and logistics of vaccine distribution across Alaska, helping the coalition refine strategies for efficient and equitable access to immunizations statewide.

What challenges do we face?

- Clarity of audience
Defining the coalition's target audience is essential to tailor messaging and outreach efforts for maximum impact.
- Missing partners
Engaging key stakeholders and potential partners who are not yet involved will strengthen the coalition's reach and effectiveness.
- Sustainability and funding
Securing long-term funding is critical to sustaining coalition initiatives and expanding immunization efforts across Alaska.
- Myth busting, building relationships
Combating misinformation and fostering genuine relationships with communities are crucial steps in increasing vaccine confidence.
- Social media literacy
Improving social media literacy within the coalition helps the coalition better counteract misinformation and engage the public online.
- Incomplete records
Incomplete vaccination records, for example, among transient populations like military families, pose challenges to accurate data tracking and follow-up care.

Plan Framework

A plan framework serves as the foundation for a strategic plan, outlining its components and guiding the development and implementation process. It provides a clear structure by defining the vision, mission, core values, priority areas, strategies, and roles, ensuring that all efforts align with the coalition's long-term goals and objectives. This framework helps establish a shared understanding and direction for coalition members as they work collaboratively to achieve progress.

Plan Component	Defined	Completed
Vision	Where we are going	TBD based on member input
Mission	What we do	TBD based on member input
Values	Our principles or beliefs to be used throughout the development and implementation of this plan	TBD based on member input
Priority Areas	Where the coalition will focus its efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Trust • Vaccine Positive Environment for Clinical Staff • Equitable Access • Data Modernization • Increasing Immunization Rates
Strategies	Targeted sets of actions and approaches to achieve progress in the Priority Areas	<i>Reference Priority Area Strategies.</i>
Leads	Those responsible for implementation	TBD based on January strategic planning session

Priority Areas

Build Trust

Building trust is key to increasing vaccine confidence in Alaska through culturally sensitive communication and partnerships with trusted community voices.



Building trust is foundational to increasing vaccine confidence and ensuring equitable immunization access across Alaska. This coalition's approach focuses on addressing the root causes of vaccine hesitancy, including concerns about vaccine safety, historical mistrust, and community-specific barriers. By fostering open, respectful dialogue and engaging in culturally sensitive communication, the coalition aims to create a safe space for questions and concerns about vaccines.

Building trust involves outreach strategies that meet Alaskans where they are, providing trauma-informed care and partnering with healthcare providers who are trusted voices within their communities. Through consistent, transparent information and empathy, the coalition works to reestablish confidence in immunization and promote the well-being of all Alaskans.

Strategies:

1. Conduct community listening sessions to understand vaccine concerns and barriers.
2. Partner with local leaders and trusted community voices to develop culturally sensitive messaging.
3. Develop and launch a public relations campaign using consistent messaging about vaccine safety and benefits.
4. Establish a network of community liaisons to collect ongoing feedback and foster partnerships.
5. Create a coalition-wide program for continuous community engagement, including an annual trust-building summit.

Vaccine Positive Environment for Clinical Staff

Building a supportive environment empowers clinical staff to confidently advocate for vaccines.



Creating a vaccine-positive environment for clinical staff is essential to building a confident and well-prepared healthcare workforce. By fostering collaboration with healthcare providers and supporting ongoing workforce development, the coalition aims to empower clinical staff with the knowledge, tools, and confidence they need to effectively promote vaccinations. This includes providing access to up-to-date, evidence-based information on vaccine safety and efficacy, and offering training that addresses common concerns and effective communication strategies.

By strengthening the confidence of healthcare providers, the coalition enhances their ability to advocate for vaccines within their communities, ultimately contributing to higher vaccination rates and healthier Alaskan communities.

Strategies

1. Identify and compile resources that address vaccine hesitancy and misinformation for clinical staff.
2. Pilot training programs in trauma-informed care and effective vaccine communication techniques.
3. Launch a statewide “Vaccine Awareness Month” campaign to recognize and support vaccine advocates among clinical staff.
4. Develop a peer mentoring program among healthcare providers to share successful strategies and best practices.
5. Establish an annual professional development conference for clinical staff focused on vaccination advocacy and education.

Equitable Access

We work to ensure all Alaskans have fair access to vaccines, especially in underserved areas.



Ensuring equitable access to immunizations is crucial for protecting the health of all Alaskans, regardless of their geographic location, socioeconomic status, or cultural background. The coalition’s efforts focus on breaking down barriers to vaccination by expanding access in underserved and rural areas, particularly for children and communities with historically lower vaccination rates. The coalition is committed to increasing public

awareness about available immunization resources, such as free community clinics for respiratory vaccines, and tailoring outreach to be culturally sensitive and inclusive.

By improving accessibility and offering convenient, no-cost options, the coalition aims to make immunizations readily available for everyone, supporting healthier communities across Alaska.

Strategies

1. Increase awareness about free vaccination clinics, particularly in underserved and rural areas.
2. Map current vaccine accessibility gaps using community and provider data.
3. Advocate for Medicaid and other insurers to create policies for equitable vaccine access regardless of insurance status.
4. Develop and distribute public education materials tailored for specific communities.
5. Advocate for universal vaccine access for all age groups, ensuring cost is never a barrier.

Data Modernization

Modernizing data ensures accurate vaccine information, enabling informed, data-driven decisions.



Data modernization is vital for enhancing equitable access to immunizations and ensuring that every Alaskan has accurate, up-to-date information on vaccination availability and coverage. The coalition is committed to advocating for improvements in data accuracy, accessibility, and usability, recognizing that reliable data empowers communities and healthcare providers to make informed decisions.

The coalition will actively promote the use of high-quality data in guiding immunization efforts across the state. By supporting data-driven approaches and championing advancements in data infrastructure, the coalition strengthens its collective ability to reach underserved populations, increase vaccination rates, and contribute to the health of all Alaskans.

Strategies

1. Promote the use of data systems for improved vaccine record management.
2. Train healthcare providers on data-driven decision-making tools for outreach planning.

3. Advocate for development of a state-level interactive dashboard to display real-time vaccination rates and gaps.
4. Integrate reminder-recall systems to enhance timely immunizations.

Increase Immunization Rates

We aim to boost immunization rates through targeted outreach, education, and expanded access.



Increasing immunization rates among all age groups in Alaska is essential to reducing the spread of preventable diseases and protecting public health statewide. Recent declines in vaccination rates, particularly for childhood immunizations, flu, and HPV, pose significant risks to community health and highlight the need for targeted outreach and education. Through direct engagement with parents, caregivers, and community members, the coalition aims to build understanding and confidence in vaccines, counter misinformation, and address vaccine hesitancy.

The coalition will also focus on improving access to immunizations, especially in rural and underserved areas, to ensure that all Alaskans have the opportunity to stay protected. By prioritizing equitable access and consistent outreach, the coalition is committed to reversing declining immunization trends and promoting health across the state.

Strategies

1. Establish baseline vaccination coverage rates by region and demographic.
2. Implement social media awareness campaigns targeting misinformation.
3. Organize community workshops and clinician training programs focused on vaccine communication.
4. Initiate statewide awareness campaigns to increase immunization rates for children, teens, and adults.
5. Strengthen outreach, education, and access programs to achieve national top third vaccine coverage rates.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Alaska's Statewide Immunization Coalition's 5-Year Strategic Plan (FY26–FY30) provides a framework to enhance immunization rates, build public trust, and strengthen community health across Alaska.

As the coalition transitions into implementation, key next steps include developing an annual implementation plan, with the first year beginning in FY26. Denali Daniels + Associates (DDA) is contracted to support the coalition through FY27, facilitating the coalition's activities, providing technical assistance, and ensuring progress toward long-term sustainability.

To implement the strategic plan, the coalition will develop actionable plans for each of the five priority areas: building trust, fostering a vaccine-positive environment for clinical staff, ensuring equitable access, modernizing data systems, and increasing immunization rates. Leads will be identified for each priority, and work will begin on targeted strategies. The coalition will also focus on creating a public-facing website and member resources, providing accessible tools for engagement and education.

A focus during this period will be planning for sustainability beyond FY27. With support from DDA, the coalition will identify long-term governance structures, determine funding pathways and explore sustainability options.

Through these efforts, the coalition aims to build a strong foundation that will enable it to support Alaskans for years to come, addressing immunization challenges and protecting the health of communities statewide.