



ALASKA IMMUNIZATION COALITION

5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FY26-FY30

May 19, 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Alaska 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 vision, “An Alaska where everyone has the knowledge and access they need to be immunized” and mission of “Working collaboratively to ensure vaccine access and community trust to empower and educate Alaskans to make informed choices about immunizations,” this plan reflects the collaborative input from a diverse range of 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 the Alaska Immunization Coalition?

The Alaska Immunization Coalition (AIC) 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 AIC 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 AIC serves as a trusted voice for immunization in Alaska. This plan is a first step to growing the AIC 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 has the AIC 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?

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

Strategic planning began with a full-day session in October 2024 in Anchorage, where members collaborated on the coalition's purpose, drafted potential vision, mission, and core value statements, and identified priority areas to guide future efforts. This foundational work was then refined and advanced through several months of work group activity, during which members contributed to specific areas.

The draft plan was revisited at a January 2025 coalition-wide session, where members reviewed the proposed plan, shared feedback on emerging strategies, and discussed approaches for the coalition moving forward. Additional input from the full coalition was gathered through structured feedback forms and work group discussions.

This strategic plan represents the culmination of those efforts—a shared plan that reflects coalition-wide engagement and collective ownership across the AIC.

Alaska Immunization Coalition Strengths



Statewide Data And Technology

Access to comprehensive statewide data and advanced technology enables the AIC to make informed decisions and monitor immunization trends across Alaska effectively.



Variety Of Backgrounds

The AIC is enriched by members from diverse professional and personal backgrounds, bringing a wide range of expertise and perspectives to the work.



Geographic Representation

With representation from communities across Alaska, the AIC can address region-specific needs and challenges, ensuring that efforts are inclusive and responsive.



Tribal Health Voices

The inclusion of Tribal health voices ensures that 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 AIC 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 AIC refine strategies for efficient and equitable access to immunizations statewide.

What Challenges does the AIC face?



Clarity Of Audience

Defining the AIC'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 AIC's reach and effectiveness.



Sustainability And Funding

Securing long-term funding is critical to sustaining AIC 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 AIC 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 AIC's long-term goals and objectives. This framework helps establish a shared understanding and direction for AIC members as they work collaboratively to achieve progress.

Plan Component	Defined	Completed
Vision	Where the AIC is going	An Alaska where everyone has the knowledge and access they need to be immunized.
Mission	What the AIC does	Working collaboratively to ensure vaccine access and community trust to empower and educate Alaskans to make informed choices about immunizations.
Values	Principles or beliefs to be used throughout the development and implementation of this plan	<u>Access and Equity:</u> Ensure vaccines are available to all Alaskans <u>Safety:</u> Support the highest safety standards in development, regulation, and administration of vaccines <u>Collaboration:</u> Foster partnerships to achieve shared goals <u>Empowerment:</u> Support individuals and communities with the knowledge and tools to make informed, confident vaccination choices. <u>Trust:</u> Build and maintain trust through transparency, reliability, and meaningful community connections
Priority Areas	Where the AIC will focus its efforts	• 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	Reference Priority Area Strategies.
Leads	Those responsible for implementation	Reference Work Group Plans.

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, mistrust, and community-specific barriers. By fostering open, respectful dialogue and engaging in culturally sensitive communication, the AIC aims to be a source of reliable, transparent information 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 AIC 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.



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 AIC 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 AIC 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 AIC 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.



Vaccine Positive Environment for Clinical Staff

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

Creating a vaccine-positive environment for all levels of 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 AIC 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 AIC 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 and data 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

The AIC works 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 AIC’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 AIC is committed to increasing public trust and 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 AIC 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, Medicare and other insurers to create policies for equitable vaccine access regardless of insurance status.
4. Develop and distribute public education materials tailored for communities and recognizing the importance of incentivizing parents and guardians.
5. Advocate for universal vaccine access for all age groups, addressing barriers such as language, transportation, cost, or others.



Increase Immunization Rates

The AIC aims 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, pose significant risks to community health and highlight the need for outreach and education. Through direct engagement with parents, providers, caregivers, Community Health Aides, and community members, the AIC aims to build understanding and confidence in vaccines, counter misinformation, and address vaccine hesitancy.

The AIC will also focus on improving access to immunizations, especially in rural and underserved areas, to ensure that all Alaskans have the opportunity to stay up to date with recommended vaccines. By prioritizing equitable access and consistent outreach, the AIC 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

The Alaska 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 AIC 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 AIC through FY27, facilitating the AIC's activities, providing technical assistance, and ensuring progress toward long-term sustainability.

To implement the strategic plan, the AIC 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 AIC 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 AIC will identify long-term governance structures, determine funding pathways and explore sustainability options.

Through these efforts, the AIC 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.





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Prepared By
Denali Daniels + Associates