

## Barriers to adult immunization and strategies to improve coverage

**Litty Varghese**

Senior Charge nurse, Head of Nursing Education, Department of Nursing, AHS/SEHA, UAE

Vaccination against childhood communicable diseases through the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) is one of the most cost-effective public health interventions available. Most causes of vaccine preventable illness among children are relatively uncommon due to high rates of vaccination and very effective vaccines

Adult vaccination is one of the most important tool for reducing morbidity and mortality not just in the elderly but in other members of the society by increasing herd immunity, reducing severe clinical outcome and helping in eradication of the disease.

The immunization program overall has been very successful with kids. So is there is a problem? Yes, there is. We're not doing so well with adults

Adults are recommended to receive vaccinations based on their age, underlying medical conditions, lifestyle, prior vaccinations, and other considerations

Although provider recommendation is a key predictor of vaccination, more often clients report not receiving vaccine recommendations at healthcare provider visits. Other barriers to vaccinating adults, including the cost of providing vaccination services, inadequate or inconsistent payment for vaccines and vaccine administration, and acute medical care taking precedence over preventive services. Despite these challenges, we introduced a number of strategies which have been demonstrated to substantially improve adult vaccine coverage. Providers are encouraged to incorporate routine assessment of their adult patients' vaccination needs during all clinical encounters to ensure patients receive recommendations for needed vaccines and are either offered needed vaccines or referred for vaccination.