



CASE STUDY

Mosaic Medical: ADOLESCENT COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SCHOOLS

Based in central Oregon, Mosaic Medical Community Health Center operates 16 clinical sites— including school-based health centers (SBHCs) in four high schools and two elementary schools—in the tri-county area. Mosaic Medical employs 350 staff who provide family medicine, pediatrics, internal medicine, prenatal services, dental care, behavioral health, enrollment assistance, support services, and more. The tri-county service area includes small- and mid-sized cities, as well as multiple rural communities. The School-Based Health Alliance (SBHA) interviewed Tamarra Harris, Mosaic Medical Pediatric Program Manager, about the health center’s adolescent COVID-19 vaccination programs.

Historically, Mosaic Medical held relationships with schools in several communities through their SBHC program. Before establishing their SBHCs, it was necessary to provide significant data on student health issues to convince the school district to open school-based sites. Once established in those schools, the SBHC staff were present daily and developed ongoing relationships with faculty members and school health services personnel. With the onset of COVID-19 and the closure of schools in March 2020, the SBHC staff were not in regular contact with school staff in the three communities they serve, thus impairing the relationship. When schools reopened, Mosaic Medical SBHC staff needed to rebuild trust through frequent contact with school administrators to remind them of the essential medical and behavioral health services they provided to students.



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A positive consequence of rebuilding the relationship with school administrators is that the district plans to open an SBHC in every high school. A new high school with an SBHC is under construction and will open in the winter of 2022. In February 2022, Mosaic Medical will open an SBHC in an existing high school in the Bend-LaPine school district. Down the line, the school district plans to install additional on-campus modular units at existing schools, which will serve students and function as a full-service pediatric clinic for the entire community.

Working with Schools

In late winter 2020, a school district staff member asked Mosaic Medical how quickly they could initiate vaccine clinics in the high schools. Mosaic Medical immediately convened a team and developed a vaccination plan

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that they operationalized in 10 days. Mosaic Medical ensured a strong partnership among the schools, federally qualified health centers, county health services, and the health department. Mosaic Medical understood the need for clear,

consistent messaging as schools rolled out vaccination plans. They recognized that it would be ineffective to undertake planning with multiple individuals at each site. Mosaic Medical relied on district contacts to coordinate events at schools in the tri-county area.

In early spring 2021, Mosaic Medical met with their community partners and the schools to implement vaccination plans. Team members engaged with the school safety coordinator and the janitorial staff, mapping out the gym in each school as a portable clinic. The team developed a master plan that ensured adequate school staff were present to provide necessary facility services. When the team scheduled school-wide vaccine events, the SBHC was closed for the day staff went to work at the vaccine event. Medical assistants, nurse practitioners,

behavioral health staff, and registration representatives were present to ensure a smooth flow of patients. Before each clinic, Mosaic Medical staff assessed the size of the gym, how many vaccine doses were available, how many vaccinators would be present, and the required number of clinic hours. Students could schedule an appointment time, but walk-ins were also accepted.

Beginning in April 2021, vaccination clinics occurred at six high schools and two middle schools to vaccinate eligible students. The clinics were offered before, during, and after school hours, from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. At one of the first sessions at a high school, 141 youth received vaccines in one day. Mosaic Medical determined that one vaccinator could vaccinate 12 students per hour, including the 15-minute post-vaccination wait time. With four vaccinators onsite, they could vaccinate 48 students per hour. The team implemented 14 vaccine clinics in middle and high schools to ensure students completed both vaccine doses. The vaccines were free of charge. In addition to school-based vaccination events, students obtained the vaccine on Thursdays at Mosaic's community clinic in Bend on a walk-in basis.

In May 2021, Mosaic Medical moved its mobile clinic to a popular outdoor spot at Riverbend Park for a morning vaccination session. With 500 doses left over from the previous day's vaccinations, they coordinated with the Parks and Recreation Department to set up space in the park. Food was available, as well as gift certificates from local businesses. The event was overwhelmingly popular, with a line of cars one-quarter mile long with people waiting to be vaccinated.

Innovations, Promotion, and Promising Practices

Mosaic Medical deployed a variety of methods to assist students and their families in obtaining the vaccine, including:

- Provided uniform messaging with consistent documents in each school.
- Encouraged online registration and scheduling to expedite patient flow but also accepted onsite paper registrations from walk-ins. Staff noted that registration takes the greatest amount of time in the clinic workflow.



- Did not require parental/guardian permission for students aged 15-17 to receive the vaccine, per state regulations. However, Mosaic Medical's goal was to obtain family involvement and have a parent/guardian sign the forms whenever possible.
- Had school staff verify the student's age, provide a name tag for identification, provide a COVID questionnaire, and review registration documents to improve the flow of patients at each vaccine event. Once completed, the students sat in a waiting area to be vaccinated.
- Behavioral health staff walked students to the vaccination area and offered an opportunity to share their fears or anxieties about the vaccination. Staff taught students calming breathing techniques to decrease anxiety.
- The school provided snacks to increase student comfort, played music, allowed a friend or family member to accompany the student, and offered small items as incentives.
- Provided enrollment assistance specialists to help parents/guardians obtain insurance if needed at the school vaccine appointment. Community health workers (CHWs) were present to assist with any other family needs.
- Held vaccine clinics at every school, enabling many families to walk to the building and avoid transportation issues.

The schools advertised and promoted the vaccine clinics on their websites. Health classes delivered presentations to educate and inform students and address

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misconceptions about the virus and the vaccine. The school district created a large poster stating "I Got the Shot" and displayed it in each school. Once students were vaccinated, they were able to be photographed in front of the poster. Many students chose to share the photo and use the hashtag #IGotTheShot on Instagram, Tik Tok, Facebook, and other social media sites, encouraging their peers to receive the vaccination.

The school district spearheaded a consistent communication process throughout the tri-county area, providing the same informational documents and memorandum of understanding (MOU) at every school. They distributed trusted resources from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Oregon Health Authority to every family.

Challenges

While it was beneficial that Oregon State law allows youth aged 15+ to consent to their vaccinations, this fact in the local news cycle triggered anti-vaccination protestors. On the first day of the vaccine event at Bend High School, the school learned about the protestors. In response, students created TikTok and Instagram videos to promote the vaccine. Several also wrote a letter to the school's parents/guardians and posted it on social media and the local

news, stating, “adults have rights, and we have rights.” The students became avid activists in support of the vaccine.

Students partnered with Mosaic Medical staff, local pediatricians, and county health professionals to address the science and dispel vaccine myths and produced a video titled [Will the COVID 19 Vaccine Affect Fertility - Central Oregon Providers Respond](#).

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Future Plans

When the COVID-19 vaccine is available for elementary-aged children, Mosaic Medical plans to work with their community partners to identify locations such as libraries, parks and recreation programs, and the elementary school for promotion and vaccination sites. Mosaic Medical plans to send documentation home to obtain parental permission and schedule vaccine clinics in the evenings and on weekends to accommodate families. Mosaic Medical already discussed working with Head Start to schedule clinics in their settings.

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Key Lessons Learned

Mosaic Medical emphasizes the critical role of relationship building within the school community. They advise all health centers to step into the school setting without judgment and recognize that schools are under tremendous pressure. Mosaic Medical recommends building relationships with the pediatric community. For instance, Mosaic Medical scheduled weekly meetings with the community pediatricians, parks and recreation staff, local businesses, school staff and administrators, and others contributing to the effort. Some additional tips for building a solid foundation with schools include:

- Adjust to the setting in the school, as those within the school system know the community well and can best communicate with everyone involved.
- Walk the vaccination site in the school before clinic day to know the space and optimize workflow.
- Be aware of the school administrator’s views about the vaccine so that everyone involved can be kind, respectful, and politically aware. Ultimately, a school may host the clinic, but they may not help a health center achieve its goals if they don’t support the vaccinations; health centers need them onboard to attain success.
- Be flexible. It is necessary to adapt and quickly change if you want success.
- Make sure the staff who first greet patients believe in the vaccine and set the right tone.
- Seek out other places in the community where people gather and consider offering vaccine clinics in those locations to accommodate youth and adults.