

George Latimer
County Executive

Department of Health

Sherlita Amler, M.D.
Commissioner

July 31, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

August is National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM). This annual observance highlights the efforts of health care providers to protect patients of all ages against vaccine-preventable diseases through on-time vaccination.

During NIAM, Westchester County Department of Health encourages you to ensure that your patients are up to date on recommended vaccines. Research has consistently shown that healthcare professionals are the most trusted source of vaccine information for parents and patients, so please make use of every opportunity that you have to discuss vaccinations and pass along vaccine education materials to your patients.

NIAM is an optimal time to access CDC educational resources like the [#HowIRecommend Video Series](#), which offers simple and practical guidance for having successful vaccine conversations with parents and patients. These short videos demonstrate how to make effective vaccine recommendations, address common vaccine questions, and take a team-based approach to vaccination.

CDC has developed CME activities to help healthcare professionals have successful conversations with parents about vaccines. Access these CME activities at the links below:

- How Nurses and Medical Assistants Can Foster a Culture of Immunization in the Practice
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/vaccine-communication/foster-culture-of-immunization.html>
- Pediatric Immunization: Navigating Difficult Conversations with Parents
<https://www.medscape.org/viewarticle/907254external>

The Public Health Foundation and CDC have developed a [digital communication toolkit](#) with messages and graphics tailored to your role as a healthcare professional emphasizing the importance of vaccination for your patients. Show your practice's support of vaccination throughout the month by using this content on your website and on social media. During NIAM and beyond, you can engage with CDC and other healthcare professionals on social media by using #ivax2protect in your posts.

To help you address vaccination issues and concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic, below are some helpful links that you can reference:

- Vaccination Guidance for Providers during the COVID-19 Pandemic
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/PleaseContinueVaccinatingPatients.pdf>

- How to boost vaccination rates during the COVID-19 pandemic
<https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/public-health/how-boost-vaccination-rates-during-covid-19-pandemic>
- Is it safe to immunize my baby during the COVID-19 pandemic?
<https://www.legacycommunityhealth.org/newsblog-is-it-safe-to-immunize-my-baby-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>
- WHO warns millions of children at risk as Covid-19 pandemic disrupts routine vaccinations
<https://www.statnews.com/2020/05/22/who-routine-childhood-vaccinations-disrupted-coronavirus/>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sherlita Amler MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sherlita Amler, MD