

# Charting a Path to Increase Immunization Rates in the Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Settings

## Vaccines

are a critically important tool for reducing morbidity and mortality among older residents in long-term care settings, including skilled nursing care centers, assisted living communities, and post-acute care facilities. In an effort to maximize immunization rates in the nation's long-term care settings, The Gerontological Society of America convened a 1-day stakeholder meeting focused on successes and needs in immunization practice for long-term care staff and residents.

Learn more at [https://navp.org/images/navp/PDF/ImmunizRatesWP\\_FNL.pdf](https://navp.org/images/navp/PDF/ImmunizRatesWP_FNL.pdf)

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## Long-Term Care Residents

**4** million people are admitted to long-term care facilities each year

**+** Increased management of chronic and acute health conditions needed



More than half of adults in assisted living communities are **85** years of age or older

## Disease Impact

Influenza and pneumonia are the **8<sup>th</sup>** leading cause of deaths among Americans

Risk of hospitalization for pneumonia is **30 times higher** for long-term care residents than risk for adults living in the community

**90%** of those deaths occur in people **65** years of age or older

Shingles occur in:

**1 in 3** adults



aged **50+**

**1 in 2** adults



aged **85+**

**Immunity declines with age** The body is more susceptible to developing an infectious disease and having more serious sequelae when that occurs

## Benefits of Vaccination in Older Adults

Decreased risk of hospitalization



Reduced exposure to other pathogens, invasive treatments, and disruptions that come with acute care

Very effective formulations available to overcome age related decline in immunity

Recommended for staff & residents by the CDC

## Challenges with Vaccinating in Long-Term Care

**1** Organizational barriers, including fostering a culture of immunization starting with leaders and administrators

**2** Obtaining informed consent for vaccinations from residents and staff members



**3** Managing costs and optimizing billing for vaccines

**4** Maintaining high levels of motivation among vaccine champions



## Prioritized Strategies to Improve Immunization Rates

Increase use of **mandatory staff vaccination policies**

**1**

Make vaccination **condition of hire**

**2**

Implement **mandatory resident vaccination policies** across all long-term care settings

**3**

Create **financing tip sheets** (eg, roster billing, best practices, algorithms, calculator of outbreak costs)

**4**

Examine **tools and resources** for opportunities to weave immunizations into other priorities for post-acute and long-term care facilities

**5**