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Do You Have a Fundraising Plan?

A Resource Guide for
Immunization Registries

AIRA

AMERICAN
IMMUNIZATION
REGISTRY
ASSOCIATION

HEALTH INFORMATION FOR A NEW ERA

Immunization registries are the most effective tools available today to improve and maintain high immunization rates. An effective application of technology to the practice of health care, they provide health care providers with up-to-date information about the patients' health status, enabling the best use of health care resources.

Immunization registries are operational or under development in all 50 states. Most are funded entirely or in part under the federal immunization grant program (317). But that money is subject to the vicissitudes of the annual federal budget process, it is never enough. The fact is that under section 317 of the Public Health Service Act, the national immunization program is meant to supplement state-funded immunization programs. That means that all registries need more than one funding source (the federal government) to ensure sustainability.

Why then does the Institute of Medicine's publication on the current state of the United States immunization system "Calling the Shots: Immunization Finance Policies and Practices," published in 2000 say that only 29 states commit state funds to immunization "infrastructure," as opposed to vaccine purchase, and only 15 states commit direct or in-kind state funds for registry development? How can registries hope to sustain themselves with this track record?

This Toolkit is designed to assist you in getting started on the path to developing a diverse and sustainable funding base. It won't be easy. Fundraising (aka Friend Raising) requires a number of strategies, i.e. developing coalitions, aligning with (or starting) a nonprofit organization, research, communication and monitoring. Some of these strategies may apply to your situation. Others may not. You will have to research your own state and community for specific resources and develop a plan that is relevant to your needs. This Toolkit is meant to give you some helpful hints along the way. The principles presented are generic, but can be applied or adapted depending on your individual situation.



What Are My Options?

Outside of 317 grant funds, where do state and local registries find funding? The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation committed approximately \$20 million through All Kids Count from 1992-2000, but no longer funds immunization registry development. Some states receive Medicaid match funding from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Many health plans have either funded their own registries or contributed to the state and local registries. City and county health departments have contributed, and some registries have received tobacco lawsuit state settlement funds or state tobacco taxes.

This toolkit will focus on three main topics:

- *Building a coalition*
- *Making your registry indispensable*
- *Setting up or aligning with an existing nonprofit organization 501(c)3*

Coalition Building

To be successful in your fundraising efforts, you need partners that share your goal. Identifying these partners in your community and building a coalition gives your registry a presence whose collective voice is heard not only in your local area but throughout the region and nationally as well. Coalitions equal credibility. They not only provide you with input from multiple constituents but are a great marketing tool. They allow you to communicate:

- **A sense of urgency** (if you have key members of your community behind you)
- **Value**, because the coalition represents the community's perspective
- **Progress**. In fact, the good will generated from a coalition will go a long way in starting and maintaining the momentum necessary to raise funds and ensure sustainability

Coalitions are influential with policymakers. Individuals and groups who come together around a common goal and vision have power. They can influence decision-makers to change policies or allocate funding in support of their cause. Coalitions are also excellent mechanisms for sharing resources, gathering information and generating innovative ideas.

How Do I Begin?

Begin by identifying natural allies. These are individuals, groups and organizations that have a mission similar to your own. Potential allies for immunization registries might include the following:

- *Health plans*
- *Professional medical associations*
- *Health clinics, hospitals, school nurses, pediatricians*
- *Health or child-focused community-based organizations, such as WIC, head start programs, foster care agencies, homeless shelters, child advocacy organizations and schools.*
- *State health department*
- *County health department*
- *Medicaid*
- *Local fire and police*
- *Pharmacists*
- *Vaccine manufacturers*

Coalitions Require:

- **Vision**. A compelling picture of the possibilities
- **Impact**. The capacity to deliver tangible results that increase productivity, add value and improve efficiency
- **Mutual trust**
- **Information sharing**



COALITION MAKES AUCTION A SUCCESS

Holiday Fest is a fundraiser in Grand Rapids, MI, that benefits five non-profit organizations, all of which work to provide healthcare to adults and children. The success of this fundraiser lies in the committed group of 12 volunteers who organize the event, solicit for auction items, provide marketing and set up the day of the event. The Holiday Fest includes food, beverages and a silent and live auction. This event has generated over \$100,000 for each of the charities. An auction fundraiser requires good planning, has low overhead and provides a way to network with others in your community.

COALITION ASSISTS IN REGISTRY FORMATION

The Arizona Partnership for Immunization (TAPI) is a non-profit statewide coalition of over 400 members. Through the efforts of TAPI's partners from both the public and private sectors, immunization coverage rates in Arizona have improved dramatically, with nearly three in four children fully immunized by age two. The unique partnerships formed by TAPI also spurred the development of the Arizona State Immunization Information System (ASIS), which was funded through a grant from the Flinn Foundation. With the assistance of ASIS, immunization information is now available to all health care providers to help them determine the immunization status of children seeking services in both public and private settings.

Make Your Registry Indispensable

A registry that serves the needs of health care providers, managed care, Medicaid and families will easily prove its worth. The data collected by registries serves many purposes. It can augment MCO data, increasing HEDIS scores or other quality of care measures, allowing health plans to more effectively target outreach to the children most in need. It can also support Medicaid's efforts to ensure that their clients are receiving proper care, while simultaneously lowering costs by preventing unnecessary immunizations. If the child's yellow card is lost or missing, physicians and the families can benefit from the registry's ability to generate a new record and/or provide any missing data.

The idea is to make immunization registries part of the public health infrastructure and ensure public funding. This is of particular importance, if compliance is voluntary. Chances are, once you have a good system, the private sector will want to join the bandwagon.

Relationships are different than providing value—they are one-to-one, established over time, built on trust. Success depends on your ability to develop these relationships—it's like media relations—it doesn't just happen—relationships with the community, local chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics and American Academy of Family Practitioners, Medicaid, etc. are all key to building your support base.

Set Up or Align With a Nonprofit Organization

Many public sector agencies have established nonprofit organizations to assist them in developing public/private partnerships. This enables the public sector agency to develop a wide range of programs and services that would otherwise not be funded. Registries can learn from this model.

Public/private partnerships can help registries with the job of improving immunization rates in their state. The nonprofit partner has the ability to access private funding, as well as matching gifts from corporations, a very attractive funding source for registries. Nonprofits also support marketing and outreach and provide additional resources. Nonprofits can generally be more entrepreneurial and flexible than government agencies. They are often able to generate additional revenue from private sources.

Partnership Resources

Here are some resources for starting and/or funding nonprofits to align with:

- *Contact the local office of the **National Council of Nonprofit Associations** to find out who is in your area.*
- ***About.com** offers a list of articles in regard to starting a nonprofit organization.*
- *The **Nonprofit FAQ** provides similar information.*
- *The **Learning Institute for Nonprofit Organizations** maintains a list of numerous sites that offer information about starting a nonprofit.*

Tips

- ✓ *Try to put someone on your board or advisory council who will FOCUS ON FUNDRAISING.*
- ✓ *Fundraising should be a KEY PRIORITY—part of the business plan—and on the agenda of every meeting.*

Fundraising Strategies

In order to be successful in attracting potential funders, you need a comprehensive fundraising strategy that includes a variety of sources and approaches. Here are some basic ideas to get you thinking:

You need to follow a step-by-step process in the search for private dollars. It takes time and persistence to succeed.

1. *Develop your list of potential funders.*
2. *Meet them and develop a personal relationship with each one.*
3. *Be very specific in your funding request. Foundations are more likely to fund projects that can demonstrate quantifiable, positive results.*
4. *Demonstrate accountability (what you've proven you can do well).*
5. *Make the case. Demonstrate need.*
6. *Communicate frequently throughout the process.*
7. *Make sure you have community champions —well respected people who can speak on your behalf.*
8. *Be aggressive, but kind. It doesn't just happen.*

Raising funds is an investment in your future.

Corporate Sponsorships

Private corporations, especially those with developed corporate giving programs, are a source of funds, especially if some of their employees have young children—or have a story to tell. Initially, these businesses may give small contributions, but their donations can be potentially very large, especially if an alliance with the registry is seen as having a positive impact on the corporation's image.

Ask a local corporation to sponsor a special event or special “shot” day. In exchange for their financial contribution, it is your responsibility to ensure that the corporation receives significant marketing exposure. Give something to every participant with the corporation's logo highly visible. Put up a banner with the corporation's name. You need to demonstrate how companies can benefit, from a marketing and business perspective, from being involved with you.

Corporate sponsorship should not replace other forms of fundraising. Rather, it should be used to create more awareness so the other parts of your fundraising efforts are enhanced through the marketing and promotional activities of the sponsor.

Resources:

- *User Satisfaction Surveys. This tool can be used to demonstrate to funders the need for registries within the community.*
- *Pharmaceutical Companies (best for small grants, special projects—not operating funds)*



Foundation Grants

Finding funds to cover the annual operating budget is one of the biggest challenges registries face. Local foundations are often approached for seed money and start-up grants, as well as capital campaigns, although they may ask to have their funds matched by other sources. Some foundations, however, do give general operating support. They are often supportive of local initiatives that have impact on the community. This is where the **Make Your Registry Indispensable** principle really applies.

A strong source for healthcare funding is a state or local healthcare conversion foundation. Healthcare conversion foundations are federally-mandated foundations formed when tax-exempt health plans are sold and become for-profit institutions. Once these plans are sold the profit generated from the sale must be earmarked for community use. Currently, there are approximately 160 healthcare foundations operating across the country. A March 2002 report published by Grantmakers in Health estimates that these foundations have nearly \$15.3 billion in assets.

Foundations look for excellent leadership, excellent programs and an excellent business plan. Make certain that your funding priorities are set and that they match the goals and funding priorities of the foundation you seek funding from. Specific projects tend to be of greater interest to most foundation funders. They like to be able to see exactly how the money will be used and to assess the success of their investment. **Target those foundations that provide operating or annual support if you find that your funding priorities cannot be packaged into projects.** Alternatively, your general operating dollars might have to come from non-foundation sources.

Resources:

- *Foundation Center Website; www.fdncenter.org*
- *The Foundation Center Directory available online at www.fconline.fdncenter.org or at participating cooperative collections in your area*
- *Grantmakers in Health (GHI); www.ghi.org*
- *Search www.google.com for local foundation annual reports and state or local healthcare conversion foundations*

GOLF OUTING

Many TV and radio stations sponsor charity golf tournaments, raising between \$25,000-\$50,000 per event. **Genesys Health System in Flint, Michigan** raised over \$50,000 by collaborating with the local media to organize a golf tournament for immunizations. The benefits from this fundraiser allowed the health system to hire an immunization coordinator to coordinate VFC and to provide registry data entry for 129 private provider offices. This health system saw the benefit of this position and has integrated it into their immunization program. This position has been supported fully by Genesys for the past five years.

FOUNDATION MATCH MONEY

Region 1 of the Michigan Community Immunization Registry (MCIR) in Detroit received a matching grant from a local foundation to support the registry efforts. This money has allowed registry data entry staff to travel to provider offices and assist in entering their historical data into the registry. This allows the providers to see the benefits of the registry first hand and provides them with the support needed to enter their legacy data.

CALIFORNIA COALITION FUNDING SUMMIT—PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

On January 17, 2003, the California Coalition for Childhood Immunization (C3I), convened an Immunization Registry Funding Summit. The meeting brought together a group of about 30 key stakeholders to discuss strategies for seeking funds needed to cover potential shortfalls in implementing the integrated statewide immunization information system (SIIS) in California. Speakers lay the groundwork on what is spent now, estimates for future costs, and the application process for federal matching funds. The meeting facilitator guided participants in identifying top funding sources, including: health plans, foundations, VFC operational funds, Bio-preparedness grants, and legislation. Action steps were developed to follow-up on each source within the next six months.

Great PR builds awareness and resources for small projects.

Tips

- ✓ **BE AGGRESSIVE. Don't be afraid to ask. It's part of your potential funding source's job to develop relationships!**
- ✓ **Respond to the RFP'S (request for proposals) you receive.**
- ✓ **INDIVIDUALS are another common source of funding for new or established organizations. Individuals who choose to contribute to a registry often care passionately about immunizations and have the means to make a substantial contribution.**
- ✓ **FUNDRAISING EVENTS. You can sell anything...t-shirts, hats, food items. Hold a dinner, an auction, a carnival.**
- ✓ **The state expects county funding. The county expects city funding. Leverage one against the other.**
- ✓ **Don't disregard the benefits of IN-KIND SUPPORT. By quantifying your in-kind support (including volunteer time), you could use this to help qualify for matching funds. Have this written into the contract, but be aware that CMS doesn't consider in-kind support for matching funds.**
- ✓ **BEST PRACTICES**
Example: Bovine Bingo in Rural Oregon...At a fundraiser in rural Oregon, placed a bet to guess in what square the "cowpie" would land. The event raised \$1,500 that was used to pay a software vendor to help build the registry interface.

Public Funding

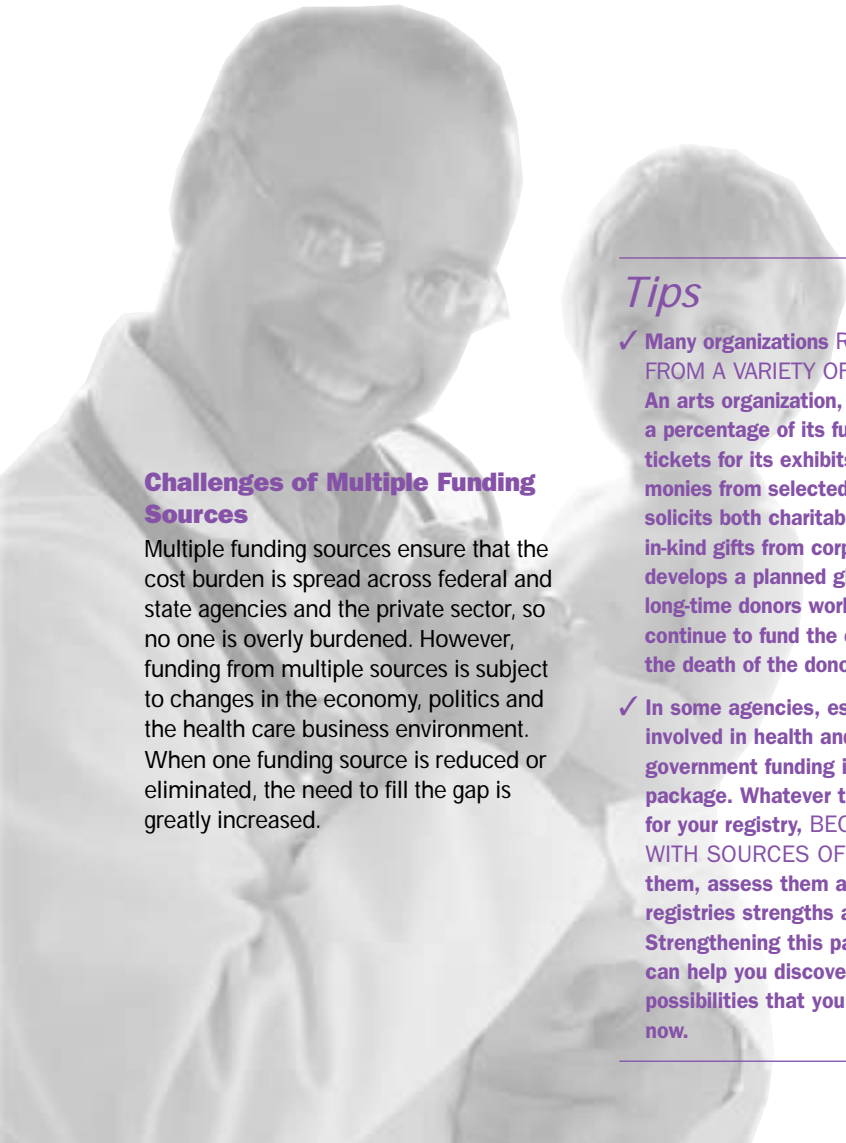
Funding sources:

- **317 Grants** & other federal appropriations
- **Tobacco Tax.** There have been some successes on the state and county level, since they're looking to promote projects for children.
- **The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)** recognize registries as an effective tool for tracking the immunization status of children enrolled in Medicaid. In order to support this work, CMS has enhanced Federal Financial Participation (FFP) monies for the design and development of new registries or the costs associated with existing registries. A copy of CMS' guidance letter can be found on the CMS website.
- **Bioterrorism funding** is being accessed by registries across the country, as they assist state and city agencies in tracking smallpox vaccinations.
- **U.S. Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Technology Opportunities Program** gives grants for technology-related projects.

Resources:

- *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; www.cdc.gov*
- *American Immunization Registry Association; www.immregistries.org*
- *Every Child By Two; www.ecbt.org*
- *National Telecommunications and Information Administration; www.ntia.doc.gov*





Challenges of Multiple Funding Sources

Multiple funding sources ensure that the cost burden is spread across federal and state agencies and the private sector, so no one is overly burdened. However, funding from multiple sources is subject to changes in the economy, politics and the health care business environment. When one funding source is reduced or eliminated, the need to fill the gap is greatly increased.

Tips

- ✓ **Many organizations RECEIVE FUNDS FROM A VARIETY OF CONTRIBUTORS. An arts organization, for example, raises a percentage of its funds by selling tickets for its exhibits. It applies for grant monies from selected foundations. It solicits both charitable contributions and in-kind gifts from corporations. And it develops a planned giving program to help long-time donors work out bequests that continue to fund the organization after the death of the donor.**
- ✓ **In some agencies, especially those involved in health and human services, government funding is a part of the package. Whatever the funding patterns for your registry, BECOME FAMILIAR WITH SOURCES OF INCOME. Evaluate them, assess them and know where the registries strengths and challenges lie. Strengthening this part of your program can help you discover major funding possibilities that you may be missing now.**

MORE REASONS FOR FUNDING DIVERSIFICATION

- The actual cost of providing government services is greater than the funds available.
- Merging resources improves service delivery.
- Increased funding sources can create entrepreneurial opportunities not always affordable to public agencies.
- The introduction of new partners, through increased funding, can broaden your program's ability to generate creative ideas.

Fundraising Guide: Evaluation Form

Help us help you! We need your input as we continue to develop resources for immunization registries. Please take a moment to fill in and return this evaluation card. Thank you!

On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the least and 10 being the most, how useful did you find this Toolkit? *Circle your answer.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 not at all useful very useful

What would make this Guide more helpful? Please be specific.

What other subjects would you like AIRA to address in future Toolkits? Please be specific.

Name of Registry _____

State _____

Please mail this form to AIRA, c/o Citywide Immunization Registry, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, 125 Worth Street, CN 64R, New York, NY 10013. Or fax to 212-676-2314.

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American Immunization Registry Association (AIRA)

c/o Citywide Immunization Registry

NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

125 Worth Street, CN 64R

New York, NY 10013

212-676-2325

www.immregistries.org