



**AIRA**  
AMERICAN IMMUNIZATION  
REGISTRY ASSOCIATION

# PRESS KIT

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## Bios



### **Rebecca Coyle, Executive Director**

Rebecca oversees the organization and its role in the development and promotion of tools and best practices to support the implementation of IIS as an essential tool in preventing and controlling vaccine-preventable diseases. Rebecca began her work in the immunization community in 2002.

Rebecca has been quoted in *USA Today*, *Politico*, *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, and *WIRED*, and featured in stories on NBC News. She's appeared on CNN Newsroom with Jim Sciutto and Poppy Harlow, The New Republic's *The Politics of Everything* podcast, and C-SPAN's *Washington Journal*.



### **Mary Beth Kurilo, Senior Director of Health Informatics**

Mary Beth oversees the AIRA Immunization (IZ) Gateway, Immunization Integration Project, and Standards and Analytics teams. She has worked in the IIS community for over a decade. Mary Beth is also a public health consultant with the Public Health Informatics Institute.

Mary Beth has been quoted in several publications, including *Modern Healthcare* magazine, *Bloomberg*, *USA Today*, and *Quartz*, and has been featured in stories on *CNBC*.



### **Lonnie Peterson, Communications Specialist**

Lonnie manages media relations activities for AIRA. She develops, implements, and evaluates AIRA's communications program to effectively communicate the purpose and value of immunization information systems and the role of AIRA in the public health community.

Prior to AIRA, Lonnie was a public information officer at the Washington State Board of Health and communications specialist at the Washington State Department of Health.



# AIRA 101: The Basics

The American Immunization Registry Association (AIRA) focuses on the success of immunization information systems (IIS)

AIRA plays a critical role in the immunization landscape. We connect with stakeholders to increase the value and impact of IIS with a goal of ensuring healthy communities.

Here are five ways AIRA makes the IIS community stronger:

## **1. Provides Insight for a Healthier Tomorrow**

AIRA pursues a forward-thinking approach to public health, which is rooted in stronger management of health information. As technology advances, using IIS to the fullest provides greater insight into public health through more accurate patient vaccination records, empowering patients, providers, and administrators to make informed decisions.

## **2. Advocates for Collaboration**

AIRA is a collective voice for the public health community on IIS. AIRA advocates for the ongoing optimization and progression of IIS and collaborates with US and international immunization leaders.

## **3. Educates on Best Practices**

AIRA is the leading authority on IIS and is a resource to multiple audiences. AIRA helps provide solutions for stronger information management, improving connectivity between electronic health record systems and IIS. AIRA develops educational materials and trainings and provides assistance to our partners to help develop best practices and foster the implementation of immunization standards across the country.

## **4. Facilitates National Conversation**

AIRA is a champion for raising important IIS topics on a national level. AIRA gathers feedback from our members and stakeholders to establish a formal dialogue, share best practices, and bring needs and concerns to a national stage.

## **5. Drives Meaningful Results for Public Health Policy**

AIRA is a partner to state and industry leaders on implementing best practices across IIS. This encourages quality data collection, reporting, and sharing. IIS data can be used to assess the vaccination status of a population and identify opportunities to better manage and improve immunization rates. IIS are indispensable tools for assessing population health and reducing vaccine-preventable disease.



# AIRA's Response to COVID-19

AIRA's role in the COVID-19 vaccine response is to support our members.

AIRA is working hard to support our members in this unprecedented time. Immunization information systems (IIS) are instrumental in the management and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine. AIRA is following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's lead to identify how to best support jurisdictions.

Here are some examples of how we provide support to our members:

- Serve as a centralized forum to unify IIS efforts and develop a shared set of priorities to ensure readiness
- Highlight the importance of IIS infrastructure and the role IIS can play in COVID-19 response
- Coordinate and align with national partners on policy, infrastructure, and funding
- Develop and disseminate resources, guidance, technical assistance, education, and training
- Assess how to best support efforts to evaluate and address the impact of COVID-19 on routine immunization and vaccination coverage of children and adults
- Support preparations for the potential for multiple outbreaks and/or concurrent vaccination campaigns



## Topics We Cover

We want to be as helpful as possible but will only speak to topics within our scope and practice.

Here are some topics we're happy to cover:

- What immunization information systems (IIS) are
- Why IIS are important
- How IIS are used by health care providers to track immunizations
- The role of IIS in vaccine distribution and rollout (routine immunizations and COVID-19)
- How and why vaccine doses administered are tracked in IIS
- Completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of IIS data
- Challenges our members have faced during COVID-19 vaccine rollout
- Challenges with onboarding new and non-traditional providers for COVID-19 vaccine rollout
- State laws and policies and the role they play in IIS data collection and use
- Data reporting requirements to CDC
- Data reporting delays and potential impacts
- Equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccine
- How IIS, electronic health records, pharmacy systems, and others can connect and share data by supporting standards-based data exchange and interoperability
- The role of IIS in vaccination coverage
- Funding challenges and their impact on the public health response, especially during a pandemic with a large-scale vaccine response
- The impact of COVID-19 vaccines on routine immunizations
- The Immunization Infrastructure Modernization Act

Find background information on IIS on [pages 6 through 9](#) below.



# IIS 101: The Basics

Immunization information systems (IIS) are the most powerful tool for managing immunization records and supporting healthier communities.

IIS are confidential, population-based computerized databases. IIS record all immunization doses given to people who live within a given geopolitical area by participating providers.

Here are five ways an IIS makes communities stronger:

## 1. Connects People with Information

IIS maintain electronic vaccination records. IIS are managed by health departments in jurisdictions (states, territories, counties, and cities). Each IIS collects and shares data across health care organizations, clinics, and pharmacies within a jurisdiction. IIS provide a full record of vaccines given and connect providers who participate in their jurisdiction's IIS with their patients' complete vaccination history. Access to this data ensures that no matter how many providers a patient sees, each one has an accurate vaccination history for that patient.

## 2. Promotes Comprehensive Immunization Records

Health care providers, pharmacies, health administrators, health insurance payers, school systems, and consumers can access full vaccination histories from their jurisdiction's IIS. Different levels of access are given to different groups of people. For example, health administrators can use IIS data to help implement federal vaccine program recommendations. This in turn ensures the integrity of patient data across a wider network. Having a full vaccination record prevents people from getting too many or too few vaccinations, which saves time and money, and improves patient care.

## 3. Encourages Accuracy in Timing and Dosage

IIS simplify immunization recordkeeping and support vaccination best practices. IIS organize data into one reliable source. IIS evaluation and forecasting tools help providers know which vaccination their patient needs. Providers get alerts when their patients are due for or missing vaccines based on the recommended immunization schedule. IIS streamline data collection and give patients and providers high-quality information in order to make the best immunization decisions.



#### **4. Increase Visibility into Areas of Need**

As an IIS grows, it gives a clearer window into the overall health of a population. The more providers that input data into an IIS, the more comprehensive the data becomes. This data can be used to find immunization opportunities and pockets of need in a community. Health officials can use IIS data to guide public health initiatives and measure their progress toward reducing diseases that vaccines can prevent. This, in turn, keeps communities healthy.

#### **5. Aids Public Health Response During an Outbreak**

IIS are invaluable tools during outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases. Health officials can access full vaccination records of people in their community from their jurisdiction's IIS. They can use this data to determine needs and risks based on people's vaccination records. This allows them to take quicker, more effective action during an outbreak.





# The Value of IIS

Immunization Information Systems (IIS) offer unmatched functionality through immunization record consolidation and management. Each of the following seven key features work together to keep our communities healthy.



## 1 Provides Consolidated Records

Comprehensive records containing immunizations administered at a previous provider office, hospital, pharmacy or school clinic give healthcare providers the full story, preventing patients from receiving too many or too few vaccines.



## 2 Manages Vaccine Inventory

Vaccine ordering, tracking, and administration are all managed in one tool.



## 3 Minimizes Waste

Ensures every vaccine is accounted for and prevents the administration of unnecessary doses of vaccines.



## 4 Forecasts Immunizations

Helpful alerts notify providers to assist with clinical decisions and management of the complex immunization schedule.



## 5 Reminds Patients of Due Dates

Automated reminders promote on-time vaccinations.



## 6 Spotlights Areas of Need

Population-level vaccine coverage data provides a clear view of communities at risk.



## 7 Expedites Response in an Outbreak

Insights into vaccination status set the stage for effective outbreak response.

Learn more ways IIS improve public health at [immregistries.org](https://immregistries.org).



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# Why a National IIS Doesn't Exist

Political barriers prevented the development of a national immunization registry. Jurisdictions were left to develop their own systems.

## **Why do states have different systems?**

The US pursued a national immunization registry in 1993. Since states had their own needs based on their own populations, jurisdictions created independent systems designed to solve local challenges. This network of systems is supported nationally but governed by each jurisdiction.

## **Will a national registry be developed in the future?**

Not in the near future. However, standardized data collection and management across IIS will allow more complete and accurate vaccination records to follow a patient throughout their health care journey.

## Situation: Trade-offs in Different Systems

Each jurisdiction has its own IIS and works under its respective state or local legislation and policy. Processes for the exchange of data, data analysis, and data reporting vary based on differing requirements, uses, and state laws. Sometimes these differences create gaps in patient immunization records. While one provider may thoroughly capture immunization information into an IIS, another provider may only collect some data. This creates inconsistencies in a patient's vaccination history. This becomes a problem when patients visit multiple providers or move to a different state without a complete immunization record.

## Strategy: Bridging the Gaps

AIRA partners with jurisdictions to develop and implement IIS standards. For example, AIRA's Measurement and Improvement Initiative gauges the differences between systems and helps improve them through technical and operational support. AIRA helps jurisdictions set up standards to bridge gaps in data collection and process. This streamlines data reporting at the provider and state levels.

## Solution: Working Toward Interoperability

As IIS continue to work together on standardization, electronic health record systems can connect with IIS to share and use data. This ultimately improves the overall health of the population.



# Where to Go for More Information

If you didn't find what you needed in this press kit, below are some contacts at our sister organizations.

## **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

[www.cdc.gov/media/subtopic/contact.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/media/subtopic/contact.htm)

Contact CDC for information on COVID-19 vaccine response systems, such as VAMS, Tiberius, VTrckS, IZ Gateway, COVID-19 Clearinghouse, etc.; COVID-19 vaccination data; how to interpret COVID-19 vaccination data.

## **Association of Immunization Managers (AIM)**

Jasmine Berry, Communications Director

[jberry@immunizationmanagers.org](mailto:jberry@immunizationmanagers.org)

Contact AIM for information on state and local COVID-19 response work, immunization policy and program development, and allocation of immunization resources.

## **Association of State and Territorial Health Officers (ASTHO)**

571-318-5431

[media@astho.org](mailto:media@astho.org)

Contact ASTHO for health agency media contact information, specific state or territory media inquiries, local perspectives on immunizations and other public health topics, and information on public health policy and state-based public health practice.

## **Immunization Action Coalition (IAC)**

[www.immunize.org/request/](http://www.immunize.org/request/)

Contact IAC for information on increasing immunization rates; educational materials for health professionals and the public; and safety, efficacy, and use of vaccines.

## **National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)**

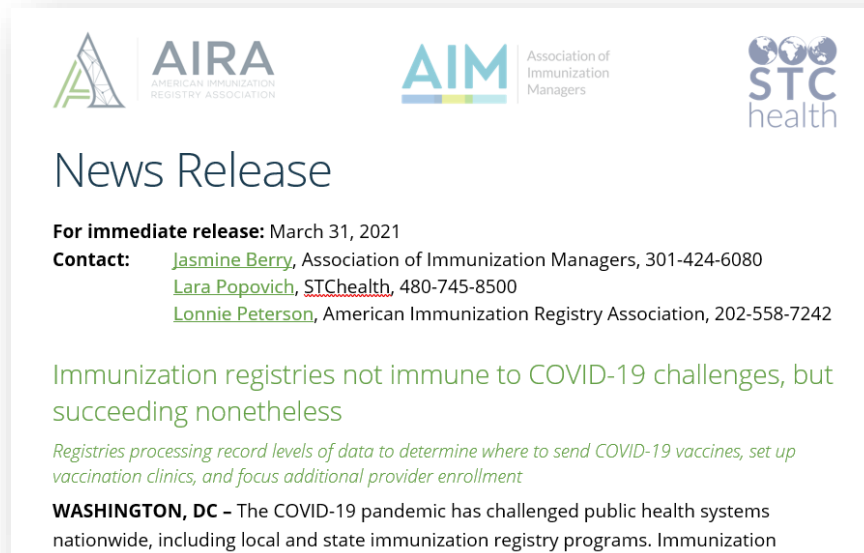
Theresa Spinner, Director, Media & Public Relations

202-783-5551

[tspinner@naccho.org](mailto:tspinner@naccho.org)



# AIRA Press Release



## AIRA in the News

[Vax Passports Rile Right](#)

Politico, April 7, 2021

[‘We’re Apollo 13-ing this vaccine rollout’](#)

USA Today, April 7, 2021

[STChealth and Key Public Health Partners Report Immunization Registries Not Immune to COVID-19 Challenges, But Succeeding Nonetheless](#)

PR Newswire and Yahoo!Finance, April 2, 2021

[The next vaccine challenge: Building a workable ‘passport’ app](#)

NBC News, March 31, 2021

[The Health 202: It’s fair to be concerned about vaccine passports. But they wouldn’t violate HIPAA law.](#)

The Washington Post, March 30, 2021

[Will Vaccine Passport Requirements Be A Shot In The Arm For Air Travel?](#)

Hot Air, March 17, 2021



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## AIRA in the News

**POLITICO** **Bloomberg**



*The Atlantic*



**Modern  
Healthcare**

**The New York Times**



**MORNING CONSULT**

**THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.**



**QUARTZ**

**verywell**health



**WIRED**

**Burlington County Times**