

## Immunization Status of Homeless Adolescents

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### Published In/Presented At

Sablak, C., Kayne, A., Aulakh, S., Harit, A., Downen J., Gaudet, B., Jarvill, T., Liu, N., Zemanek, C., Smith, A., Cuadrado, H., & Greenberg, M. (2020, April). Immunization Status of Homeless Adolescents. Poster presented at: PACEP Scientific Assembly, Pittsburgh, PA.

Liu, N., Zemanek, C., Sablak, C., Kayne, A., Aulakh, S., Harit, A., Downen, J., Gaudet, B., Jarvill, T., Smith, A., Cuadrado, H., & Greenberg, M. (2020, October) Immunization Status of Homeless Adolescents. Poster Presented at: American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) Annual Conference, Virtual.

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# Immunization Status of Homeless Adolescents

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## Introduction

Homeless adolescents experience disparate health outcomes, with increased risk for exposure to communicable diseases and higher rates of sexually transmitted infection than their housed peers. This makes their ED visit more complex since their immunization status may not be known. We set out to determine the vaccination status in a sample of this vulnerable population.

## Methods

Valley Youth House (VYH) is a shelter for vulnerable, abused, and homeless adolescents in Pennsylvania. Vaccination records are available for their clients due to state-mandated physical exams that are performed on site. This retrospective chart review evaluated immunization status on clients from 2/21/2015–8/27/2019. Results were reported in percentages and frequencies.

## Results

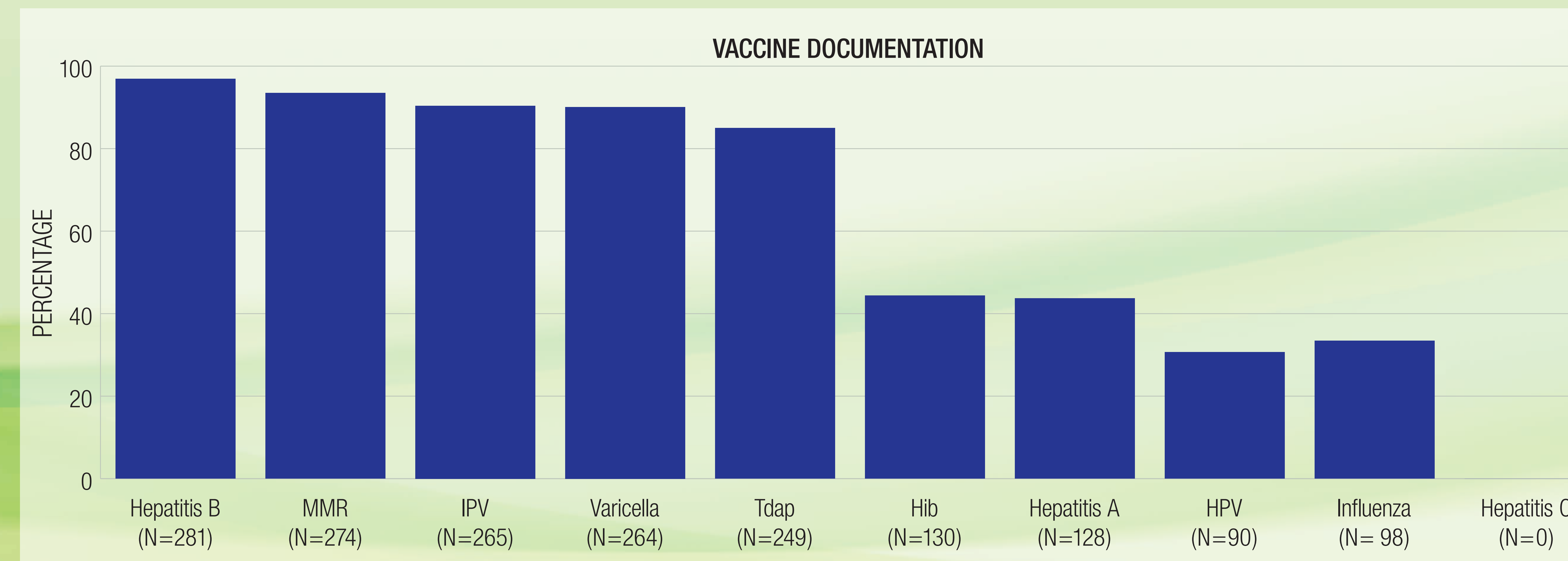
After exclusions, 293 charts were reviewed and abstracted. Of the 293 patients, 166 (56.7%) identified as female, 121 (41.3%) as male, and 6 (2.0%) as transgender. Their mean age was 15.2 (range 11–18 years old). Vaccine documentation for Hepatitis B (N=281, 96.9%), MMR (N=274, 93.5%), IPV (N=265, 90.4%), Varicella (N=264, 90.1%) and Tdap (N=249, 84.98%) was generally

good. However, documentation for Hib (N=130, 44.4%), Hepatitis A (N=128, 43.7%), HPV (N=90, 30.7%), Influenza (N= 98, 33.4%), and Hepatitis C (N=0, 0%) were less optimal or nonexistent.

Rates of HPV vaccine documentation had the greatest variability between males (N=28, 15.0%) and females (N=62, 25.3%).

## Conclusions

In this small study, it appears that immunization status for housing insecure or homeless adolescents has variability depending on vaccine type. In particular, the low rates of HPV, Hepatitis A, Influenza, and the nonexistent Hepatitis C coverage compound this population's vulnerability. ED providers should consider this in their care and this data may suggest an opportunity for an ED based public health intervention.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was funded, in part, by the Dorothy Rider Pool Health Care Trust Community Transformational Excellence Grant.