



Routine Childhood Vaccination in the Time of COVID-19: An Urgent Call to Action

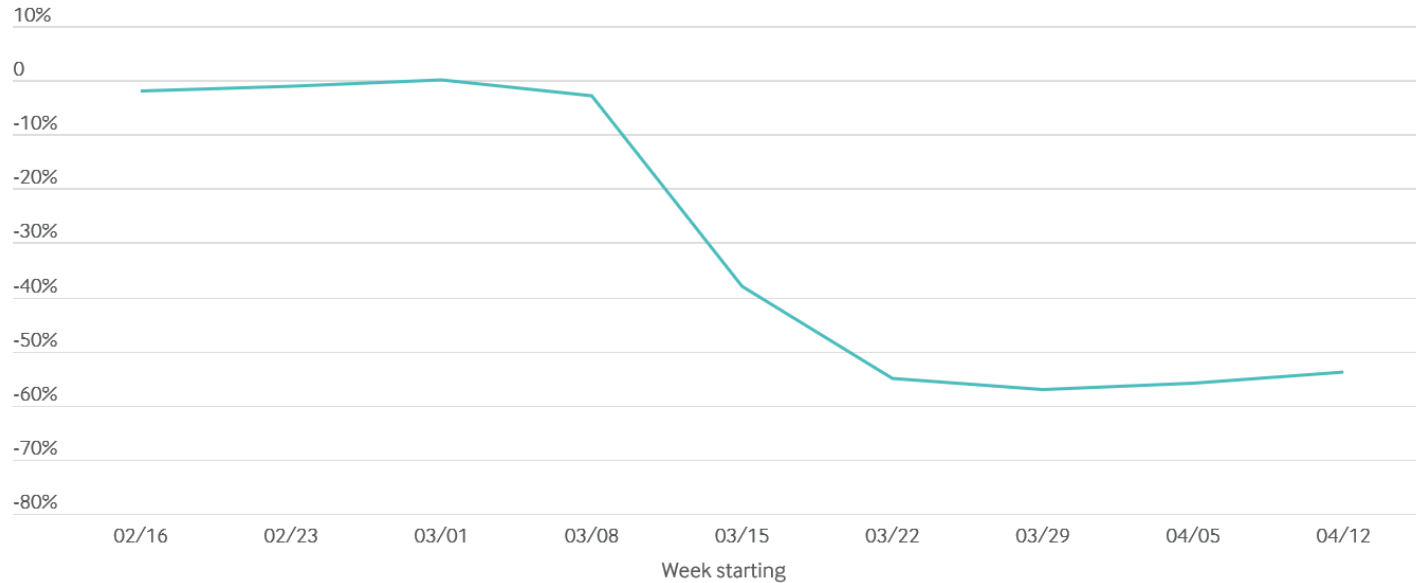
Melinda Wharton, MD, MPH

Director, Immunization Services Division

13 November 2020

The number of visits to ambulatory practices declined nearly 60 percent in mid-March and has remained low through mid-April.

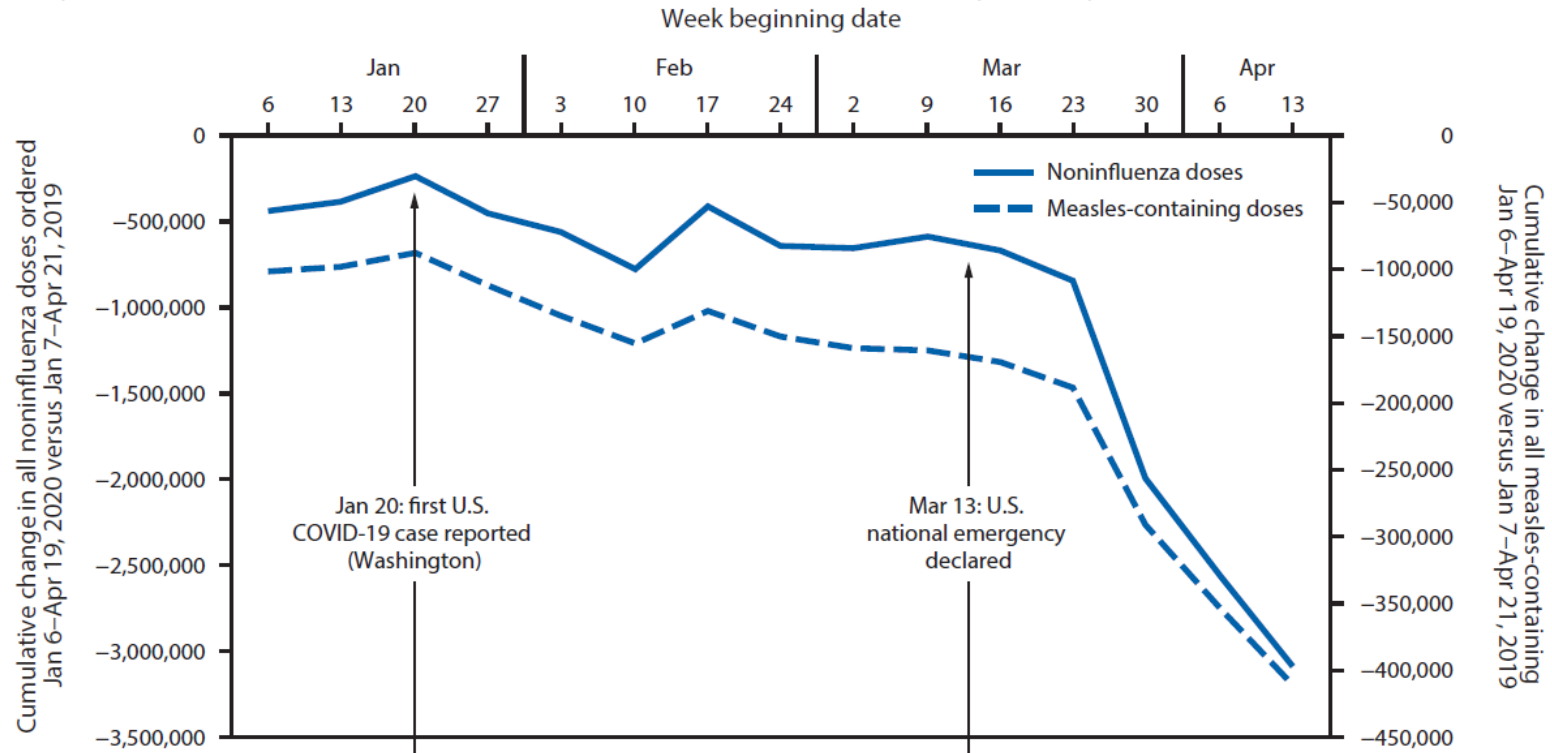
Percent change in visits from baseline



Note: Data are presented as percentage change in number of visits in a given week from the baseline week (March 1–7). Data for week of April 12 are through April 16.

Source: Ateev Mehrotra et al., "What Impact Has COVID-19 Had on Outpatient Visits?," *To the Point* (blog), Commonwealth Fund, Apr. 23, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.26099/ds9e-jm36>

Weekly changes in Vaccines for Children program provider orders for pediatric vaccines – United States, January 6-April 19, 2020

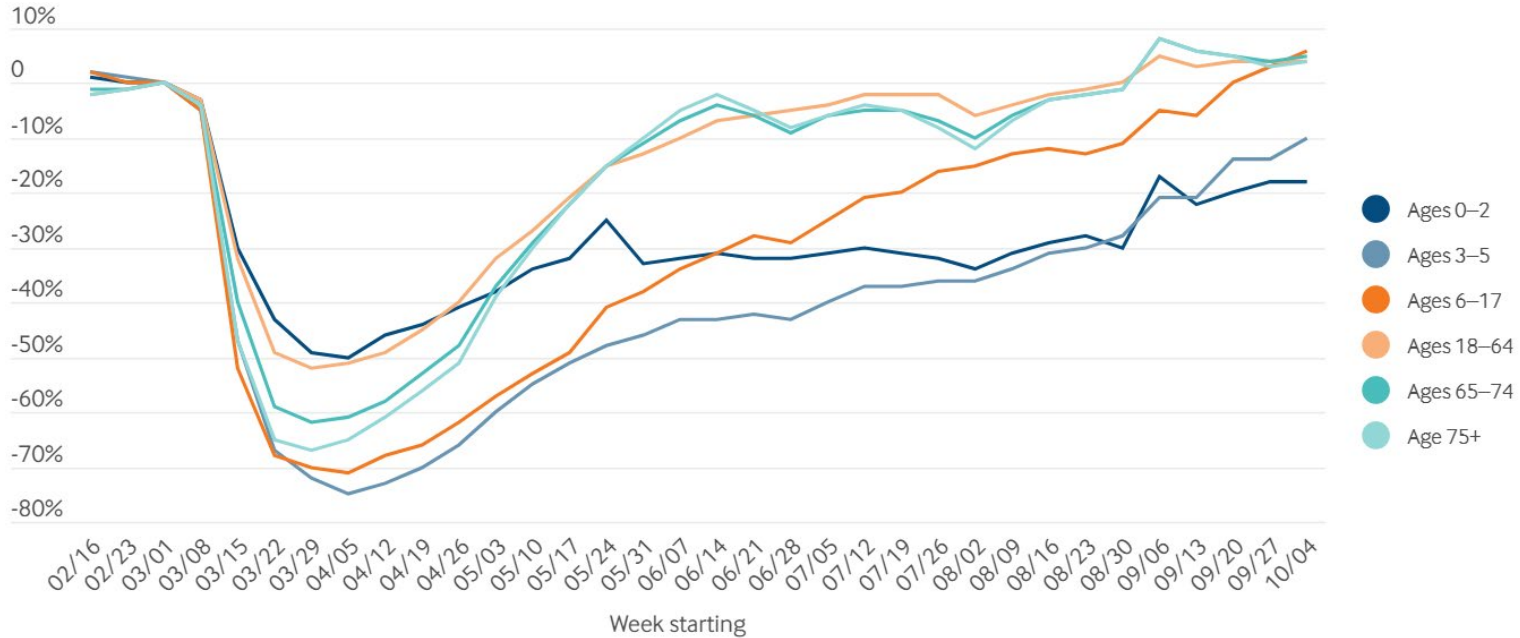


* VFC data represent the difference in cumulative doses of VFC-funded noninfluenza and measles-containing vaccines ordered by health care providers at weekly intervals between Jan 7–Apr 21, 2019, and Jan 6–Apr 19, 2020.

Santoli JM et al, MMWR (May 8, 2020)

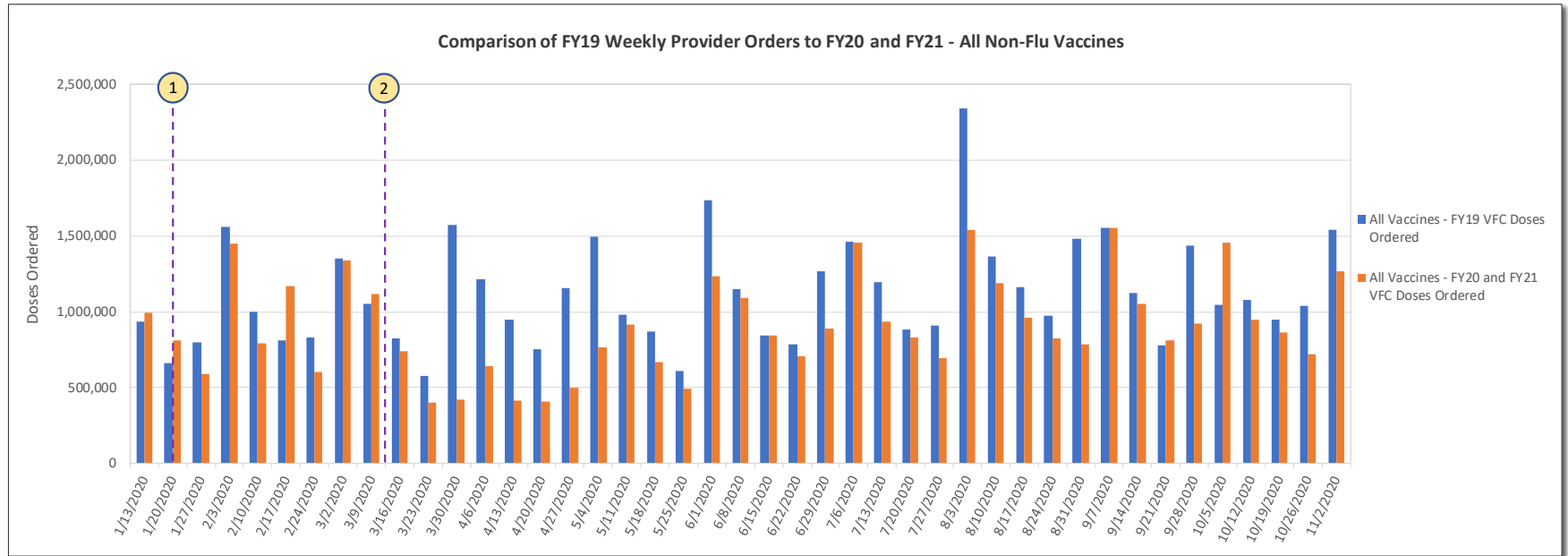
While visits overall have returned to levels prior to the pandemic, they vary by several factors, including age group. For example, visits for younger children remain substantially below the prepandemic baseline.

Percent change in visits from baseline, by age



Source: Ateev Mehrotra et al., *The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Outpatient Care: Visits Return to Prepandemic Levels, but Not for All Providers and Patients* (Commonwealth Fund, Oct. 2020). <https://doi.org/10.26099/41xy-9m57>

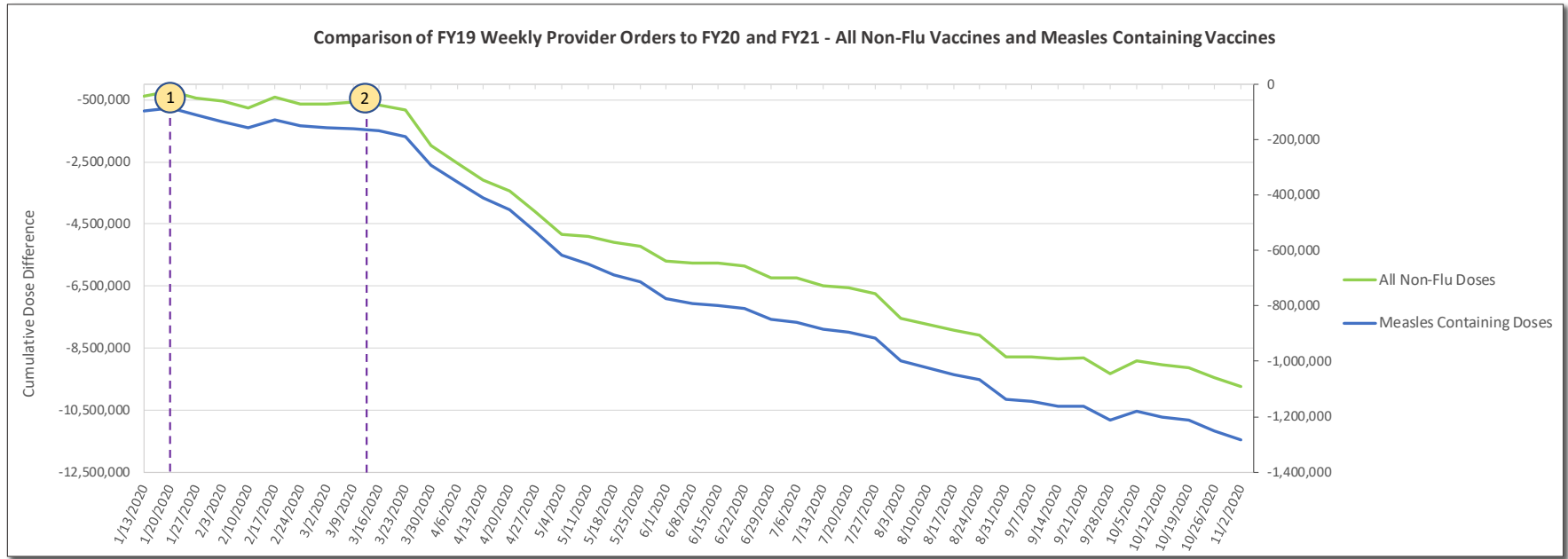
VFC provider orders have rebounded...



Notable Dates:

- 1 1/20/2020: First US case reported (Washington state)
- 2 3/13/2020: US national emergency declared

...but there still is a substantial deficit for 2020



As of November 12, overall VFC provider orders (other than flu) are down by **>9M doses** and MMR/MMRV down by **>1.2M doses**

Other data show **a larger gap in the public sector side compared with the private sector**

Call to Action: Urgent Need for Catch Up Vaccination

The 2019 National Immunization Survey-Child showed high coverage for most pediatric vaccines by 24 months of age – *if we don't address this now, what will the 2021 survey show?*

Weekly / Vol. 69 / No. 42

October 23, 2020

Vaccination Coverage by Age 24 Months Among Children Born in 2016 and 2017 — National Immunization Survey-Child, United States, 2017–2019

Holly A. Hill, MD, PhD¹; David Yankey, PhD¹; Laurie D. Elam-Evans, PhD¹; James A. Singleton, PhD¹;
S. Cassandra Pingali, MPH, MS¹; Tammy A. Santibanez, PhD¹

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6942a1.htm>



What can immunization programs do?

- Implement reminder-recall for children who have missed doses
- Communicate with parents on
 - Safety precautions providers are taking
 - Importance of making and keeping appointments for well-child visits
- Encourage compliance with daycare and school vaccination requirements
- Assure that the VFC provider network provides adequate access
 - Consider pharmacy partners
- Expand availability of immunization services
 - Community outreach
 - Evening and weekend hours
- Engage partners to help

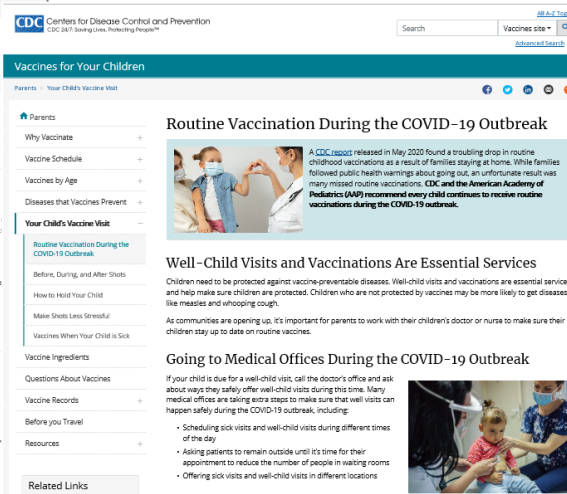
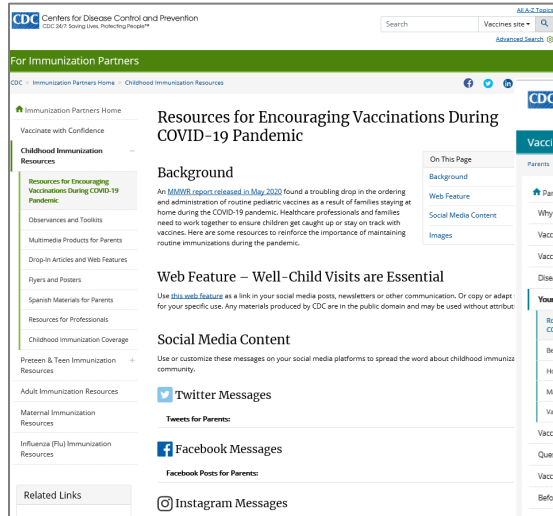
Call to Action: Urgent Need for Catch Up Vaccination (1)

- Healthcare systems and healthcare providers can:
 - Identify families whose children have missed doses and contact them to schedule appointments
 - Prompt clinicians when these children are seen to deliver vaccines that are due or overdue
 - Let families know what precautions are in place for safe delivery of in-person services
- Healthcare provider organizations can:
 - Encourage members to identify and follow up with families whose children have missed doses to get appointments scheduled

Call to Action: Urgent Need for Catch Up Vaccination (2)

- State government agencies can:
 - Send reminders to families about school immunization requirements
 - Implement follow-up for children who are not in compliance with requirements to encourage compliance
 - Use the state's immunization information system's reminder-recall capacity to notify families whose children have fallen behind on vaccines
- We all can:
 - Communicate directly to families the importance of well-child visits and getting caught up on any recommended vaccines that were missed

Resources for communicating with parents about routine vaccination during the COVID-19 pandemic



CDC resources for parents and immunization partners

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/routine
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/partners/childhood/stayingontrack.html
www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/campaigns/call-your-pediatrician

AAP's #CallYourPediatrician campaign

For more information, contact CDC
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 www.cdc.gov

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

