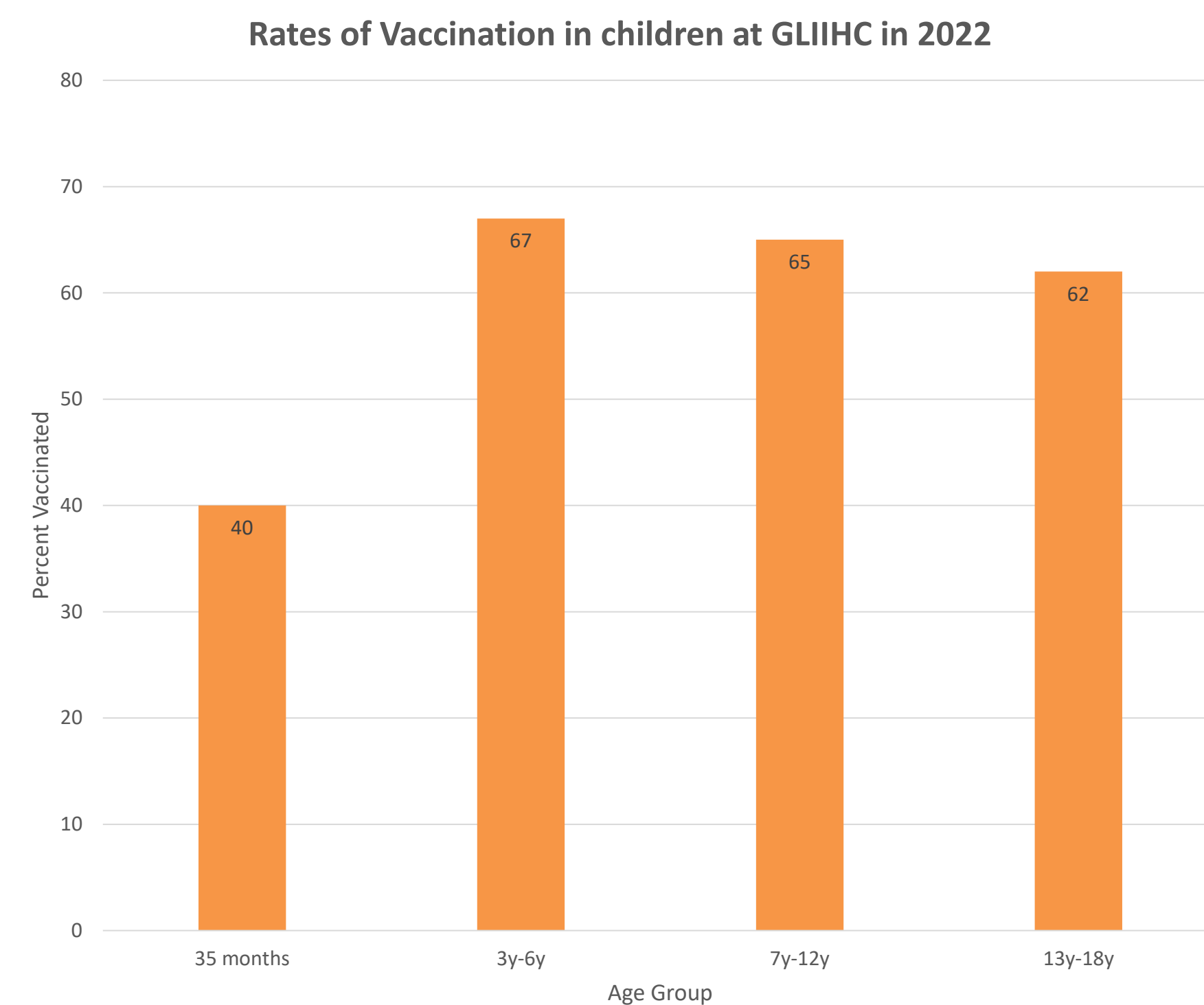


Catching up on childhood and adolescent vaccinations after the COVID-19 pandemic in the population served by the Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Center

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Introduction

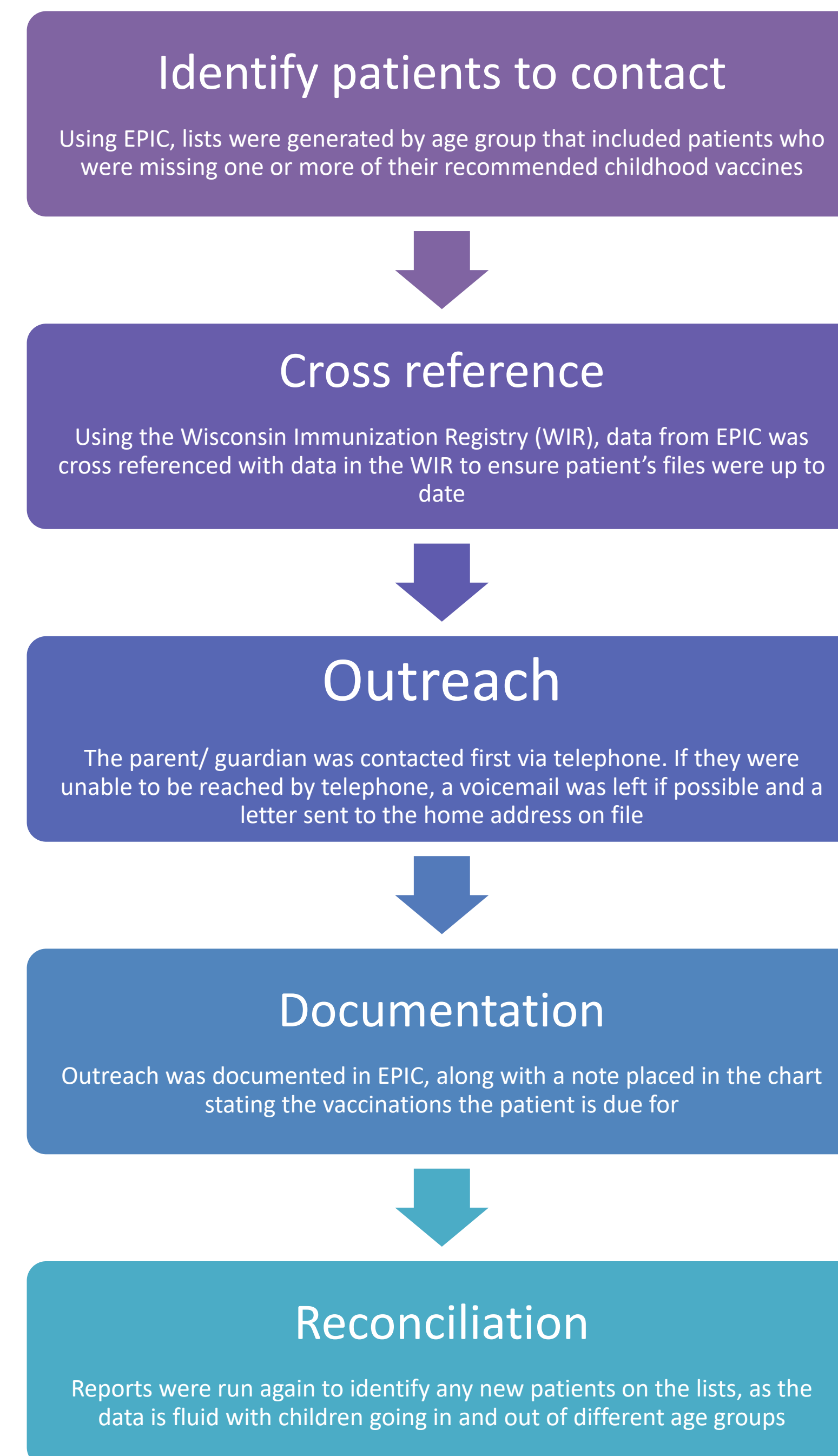
- The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the provision of routine medical care, including childhood vaccinations (1). **Childhood immunization is one of the most cost-effective ways to reduce rates of vaccine preventable disease**, and the reduction in vaccine rates due to the pandemic increases the risk of outbreak-prone diseases such as measles and polio (2).
- The Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Center (GLIHC) is a federally qualified health center that was founded to address the health of urban Native Americans living in Milwaukee, and serves people of all tribes, races and ethnicities.
- **Vaccination rates in the children and adolescents served by GLIHC were identified as low following the pandemic** by staff and a grant was awarded by the Wisconsin DHS to address lower rates in this population.



Methods

- Performed a literature review to determine most effective interventions to increase vaccination rates
- Determined outreach via telephone and mail were the most effective ways to intervene
- Developed a process to identify patients to be contacted and track outreach

Outreach Process:



Results

- Children 35 months and under were targeted first and outreach was completed
- Further outreach to the rest of the age groups (to age 18) will be performed
- Data will be reviewed after outreach is complete, and vaccination rates before and after the intervention will be analyzed

Discussion

- It can be difficult to track improvement in vaccination rates in the short term, since the data is fluid, however, we hope to see an overall improvement in rates by the end of the project in June of 2023
- Outreach is most successful when using all forms of communication possible.
- Difficulties in using targeted outreach based on patient information include outdated or out of service phone numbers and outdated addresses
- While the recommended childhood vaccines were targeted, COVID and flu vaccination rates remained low
- It's possible that parents and guardians were more hesitant about the COVID vaccine compared to regular childhood vaccines, however this would need to be investigated
- Targeted outreach can be an effective way to increase vaccination rates in children and adolescents, while also providing an opportunity to address any concerns the patient or guardian may have



Next Steps

- Consider developing and implementing a survey to be used during outreach to address barriers and vaccine hesitancy
- Consider interventions to improve COVID vaccination rates in children and adolescents
- Consider interventions during flu season to improve flu vaccination rates in children and adolescents

References

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2. Dinleyici, E. C., Borrow, R., Safadi, M. A., van Damme, P., & Munoz, F. M. (2020). Vaccines and routine immunization strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Human Vaccines & Immunotherapeutics*, 17(2), 400-407. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21645515.2020.1804776>



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