

As experts in healing and saving lives, hospitals must have the trust, respect and flexibility to manage vaccine requirements in their own facilities. The people inside hospitals are unique and need to be protected – they are often elderly, pregnant or have other conditions that put them at greater risk.



Vaccines Save Lives

Vaccines are one of the greatest life-saving inventions in human history. Innovations in vaccines have helped stop many diseases in their tracks. The more people in a community that are vaccinated, the harder it is for the virus to circulate. From polio to smallpox, vaccines protect patients, lessen disease spread and help prevent dangerous outbreaks.¹

Vaccines not only keep communities healthy, but also bolster the economy. Disease outbreaks require adults to take days off work and are expensive to treat overall, leading to billions in societal costs per year.

Unfortunately:

1. Vaccines have **become politicized.**
2. Vaccines work so well, **their importance is overlooked.**
3. Vaccine **misinformation is everywhere.**

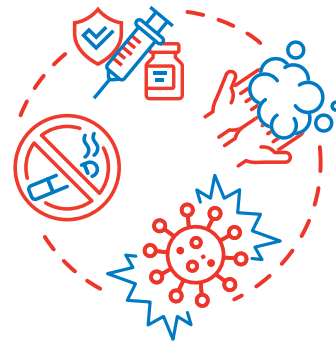


Hospitals Are Trusted Safe Zones in Their Communities

Hospitals save lives every day. They are a place of refuge, safety and care, whether that's in Midland, McAllen, Dallas or Dalhart.

Hospitals are a vibrant and critical part of their unique communities, and **hospitals make decisions every day** to ensure the safest possible environments for their employees and patients. This includes decisions about:

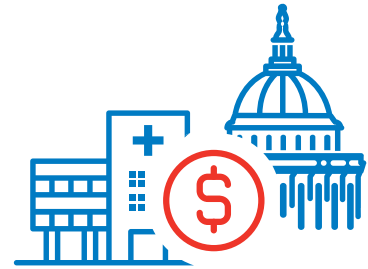
- Infection control
- Handwashing and masks
- Protective equipment
- Requiring flu vaccination of staff
- Instrument sterilization
- Prohibiting smoking



Every hospital is different. Every community is different. A safe and healthy hospital requires policies that protect patients from preventable disease. Vaccinations are one such tool. Local hospital leadership, which includes physician and nursing leaders, should be allowed to craft policies based on the threat of disease and the medical care being provided there. **A one-size-fits-all approach to health does not work in Texas.** As the saying goes, “If you’ve seen one hospital, you’ve seen *one* hospital.”

Hospitals Must Follow Federal Quality Guidelines

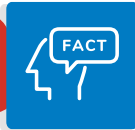
Many Texans receiving medical services in hospitals are Medicaid and/or Medicare beneficiaries. **Hospitals rely heavily on government payments for the medical care provided within their facilities.** The federal government requires many things of Medicaid- and Medicare-participating hospitals, including policies for an infection prevention and control program. It also collects quality data from hospitals, and metrics, such as the number of employees vaccinated against a particular disease, can impact a hospital's quality rating.



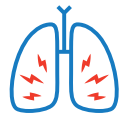
Community Immunity

Hospital patients who can't receive vaccinations – such as cancer and transplant patients – need the protection of the greater vaccinated population to avoid contracting vaccine-preventable diseases. This is known as “herd immunity” or “community immunity,” and is a vital component of public health efforts.

Vaccine Myths



Myth: It's dangerous. **Fact:** Nearly all ingredients are also in many foods – fats, sugars and salts – and vaccines do not contain preservatives, tissues, latex or metals.

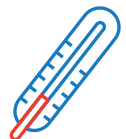


Myth: Getting sick provides better immunity. **Fact:** Getting vaccinated is a safer and more dependable way to build immunity.



Myth: Vaccine mandates cause staff departures. **Fact:** Vaccine-related issues are the least-cited reasons for hospital staff departures. Burnout and fatigue top the list.

Myth: Vaccines have terrible side effects. **Fact:** All medications may have side effects, including vaccines. However, for the majority of people, vaccine side effects are mostly mild and only last a couple of days. Examples are soreness from the shot or a low-grade fever.



Myth: Babies don't need vaccines because they get immunity from their mother. **Fact:** Babies may get some temporary immunity from mom, but only for diseases to which mom is immune. And these antibodies do not last long, leaving a baby vulnerable to disease without a vaccination.²



Science Says

Childhood vaccinations **prevent 4 million deaths²** worldwide every year.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



¹ National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, "https://www.nfid.org/immunization/10-reasons-to-get-vaccinated/"

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/