

ALERT IIS Race and Ethnicity Data Use

This document provides local public health authorities with help interpreting and utilizing county-specific vaccination rates by race and ethnicity from the ALERT Immunization Information System (IIS). These rates help improve understanding of vaccination coverage within population subgroups and identify potential disparities and pockets of need.

For questions about the ALERT IIS data, please contact the ALERT IIS Help Desk at 1.800.980.9431 or alertiis@state.or.us.

Overview

ALERT IIS is a statewide immunization registry developed to support complete and timely immunization of people of all ages living in Oregon. ALERT IIS collects immunization data from health care providers, insurance payors, and other sources including Medicaid. While the Oregon Immunization Program (OIP) publishes state-wide and county-level vaccination rates, these aggregate estimates may mask the presence of local pockets of need. Pockets of need are small geographic or demographic groups with lower immunization rates and higher disease risk. The populations in pockets of need are of public health concern, as they may reflect inequities in healthcare access and play a role in the spread of disease during outbreaks.

Interpreting the Data

- For each county, vaccination rates are only provided for race and ethnicity subgroups with greater than or equal to 10 individuals (50 for online rates).
 - o Vaccination rates based on small numbers may result in measurements that are not stable, fluctuating year to year.
- The published race and ethnicity categories are not mutually exclusive, one individual may contribute to one or more categories. Due to this, race and ethnicity categories added together are larger than the county population total.
 - o For example, an individual with an indication of Hispanic, White and Asian will contribute to the rate calculation for each of these population subgroups.
- Information on race and ethnicity is obtained from birth certificate and/or provider input.
 - o ALERT IIS maintains all inputs and does not distinguish the source of information for race; thus, race may reflect influences other than vital records.
 - o Ethnicity is coded as either null, Hispanic, or not Hispanic- multiple options cannot be saved. If vital records data indicates a child is Hispanic but a later source submits information to ALERT indicating the child is not Hispanic, the Hispanic indicator will be overwritten (and vice versa).
- Vaccination rates of different groups within a county may be due to external factors such as access to care or other barriers.
- Consult external resources (such as population census estimates) for information on the demographic make-up of the state and counties.