

EXCITE program establishes innovative model for mobile vaccine clinics

AT A GLANCE

Idaho's project with the Extension Collaborative on Immunization Teaching and Engagement provided education, access to vaccines and additional health resources through customized mobile clinics.

The Situation

As health care providers across Idaho — and the nation — began administering the country's first approved COVID-19 vaccines, mass mobile vaccine clinics proved an efficient and effective strategy. These clinics saw a drastic drop in participation, however, following the initial rush of Idahoans who were confident in their decision to get vaccinated. Providers subsequently decreased or eliminated their mobile clinic options, as they were unsuccessful in attracting those who were hesitant about receiving the vaccine. The elimination of this convenient and accessible approach increased barriers for vulnerable populations such as rural Hispanic agricultural workers.

Our Response

In early 2021, University of Idaho Extension was an active and funded participant in the first phase (Activity 1) of the Extension Collaborative on Immunization Teaching and Engagement (EXCITE). The EXCITE project is the result of an interagency agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the United States Department of Agriculture — National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The UI Extension team was additionally awarded \$200,000 in competitive funding for a second phase (June 2021



An employee of Si-Ellen Farms in Jerome receives a vaccination from health district staff at an EXCITE mobile clinic.

through May 2023). This funding was used for innovative pilot projects to address vaccine hesitancy and increase adult immunization uptake (including but not limited to the COVID-19 vaccine). The UI Extension team developed a three-step educational model for mobile vaccine clinics, prioritizing outreach to Idaho's rural Hispanic agricultural workers and their families. Extension educators and staff across five counties partnered with community health teams to coordinate and deliver these customized educational sessions.

The three steps of education for each clinic included:

1. Direct education *prior* to the vaccination clinic.
2. Direct education *during* the vaccination clinic.
3. Follow-up outreach one-two weeks *after* the vaccination clinic.

impact University of Idaho Extension

Both education and vaccination clinics were held at employer request for agricultural businesses, manufacturing companies and dairies. In addition, weekly sessions were held at the Mexican Consulate in Boise. Throughout EXCITE second phase, Extension staff maintained the integrity of the initial education model while customizing the delivery methods and content focus for each individual site's population and needs.

Program Outcomes

A total of 20 mobile vaccine clinics were completed following Extension's three-step educational model. In the project's first year, COVID-19 and influenza vaccines were available to participants, with 191 and 122 vaccine administrations, respectively. The tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis) vaccines were added during the final two clinics at dairy farms, with 28 total vaccines given. Overall, 622 Idahoans were provided reliable, evidence-based information about immunizations and disease prevention.

EXCITE (June 2021 through May 2023)	
Total clinics	20
Direct education	622
COVID-19 vaccines	191
Flu vaccines	122
Tdap vaccines (year 2)	28

The combination of Extension professionals' skills in education and relationship-building with the clinical

teams' resources for vaccine administration was considered highly successful. Observations and feedback from participants indicated that the time and effort invested in one-on-one communication in a non-judgmental environment was a key component, elevating the impact of conveniently offering vaccines at the workplace.

Beyond the direct numbers, UI Extension's EXCITE team formed crucial partnerships throughout the two-year project. Idaho Immunization Coalition and Idaho State University College of Pharmacy collaborated with Extension during the first year (June 2021-June 2022). In the second year (June 2022-May 2023), South Central Public Health District became the primary community health partner for facilitating clinics.

In particular, the relationship with the health district has resulted in longer-term commitments and potential for ongoing innovation towards mutual goals. South Central Public Health District has adopted and applied EXCITE's educational scripts, clinic coordination templates and three-step educational mobile clinic model for use in their eight-county region.

The Future

University of Idaho Extension was awarded funding for the six-month EXCITE – three Design Phase in October 2022, which supported the development of a proposal for the EXCITE Implementation Phase. The proposal was accepted and in June 2023 the team began the 18-month, \$100,000 funded project. Partnered with South Central Public Health District and Southwest District Health, the EXCITE team will develop an educational campaign focused on adult immunizations for Idahoans living in poverty.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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