



Grant allows OSF to leverage Innovation Labs-academic partnerships to improve low childhood vaccination rates

For immediate release

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(May 11, 2021 | PEORIA, Illinois) – [OSF Innovation](#) and its partners at the University of Illinois College of Medicine Peoria (UICOMP) and Illinois State University (ISU) in Normal, Illinois, have received a federal Human Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) grant of \$10,000 to continue work to expand childhood vaccinations to children of low-income families in Central Illinois.

Recent [CDC data](#) shows fewer children were vaccinated on time this year compared to last year, in part, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. HRSA invited grant applicants to propose and implement innovative approaches to increase access to and utilization of well-child visits and immunization services.

OSF is already part of the federal Vaccines for Children (VFC) program providing free vaccines to children whose families meet income guidelines. This new grant will fund vaccinations for children in families that might not qualify under those low-income guidelines. In addition, OSF will use the funding to purchase refrigerators for the mobile OSF [Care-A-Van](#) to store vaccines when going out into the community. A small portion of the grant will also support vaccine education in communities.

“The HRSA award is a competitive, multi-stage grant, and we will be working toward a second round of funding in the fall,” said OSF Design Lab Director Scott Barrows. “Our vision is to possibly expand the program throughout the state and refine efforts from what we have learned and data collected.”

“This mobile vaccine effort is part of a large-scale initiative using [OSF Innovation Labs](#) to improve the conditions that lead to health disparities. Each lab has its own best fit, and often projects can involve collaboration among the labs to ensure practical application of solutions to help vulnerable populations,” said John Vozenilek, MD, vice president and chief medical officer for OSF Innovation and Digital Health, at [Jump Simulation & Education Center](#).

The Innovation Labs are creating scalable solutions that can improve access and quality of care for Medicaid patients throughout the state. OSF OnCall Digital Health enables community health workers to use well-designed tools that leverage analytics, machine learning and artificial intelligence [for outreach to underserved populations](#). OSF Innovation has engaged in targeted partnerships to develop the pipeline for diverse, future health care workers through its [STEAM](#) and [Pre-Surgical Immersion](#) offerings via Jump Simulation.

Through the mobile vaccination effort, OSF Innovation is tapping resources in its [Data Science and Advanced Informatics Lab](#), [Children's Innovation Lab](#) and its [Design Lab](#) to use advanced AI-informed technology to fuel mobile outreach. Pediatric nurses and doctors, along with community partners, will use the OSF Care-A-Van to expand vaccinations for children in underserved areas.

Barrows says the OSF Design Lab has again partnered with Dr. Adam Cross of UICOMP who is also clinical informaticist for the [OSF Innovation Children's Lab](#), Dr. Mary Stapel, director of OSF Community Care Clinics, and Population Health Manager Elise Albers of OSF HealthCare Children's Hospital of Illinois, as well as with Dr. Shaoen Wu of ISU. The project aligns with the current [Illinois Innovation Network \(IIN\)](#), [ISU research grant](#) and current [Jump ARCHES grant research](#). The grants are receiving additional research support from interns at the U of I, ISU, University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) and Bradley University.

Dr. Stapel will be working with community members and developing partnerships, particularly with schools that have a large percentage of low-income families. As summer approaches, community outreach will accelerate to meet families where they are.

OSF HealthCare is an integrated health system owned and operated by The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, headquartered in Peoria, Illinois. OSF HealthCare employs more than 23,600 Mission Partners in 147 locations, including 14 hospitals – 10 acute care, four critical access – with 2,097 licensed beds, and two colleges of nursing throughout Illinois and Michigan. The OSF HealthCare physician network employs more than 1,500 primary care, specialist and advanced practice providers. OSF HealthCare, through OSF Home Care Services, operates an extensive network of home health and hospice services. It also owns Pointcore, Inc., comprised of health care-related businesses; OSF HealthCare Foundation, the philanthropic arm for the organization; and OSF Ventures, which provides investment capital for promising health care innovation startups. More at www.osfhealthcare.org/.

OSF Innovation, launched in 2016, is a multidisciplinary innovation center focused on internal and external innovation to solve the largest health care challenges. More at www.osfinnovation.org and www.osfhealthcare.org.

Jump Simulation, a part of [OSF Innovation](http://www.osfinnovation.org), is a collaboration between University of Illinois College of Medicine Peoria and OSF HealthCare. The Jump center replicates a variety of patient care settings to ensure novice and seasoned clinicians can practice handling medical situations in a life-like environment. Boasting six floors and 168,000 square feet, the center is one of the largest of its kind and provides space for conferences, anatomic training, virtual reality and innovation. For more information, visit www.jumpsimulation.org

University of Illinois College of Medicine Peoria (UICOMP) educates 244 medical students and nearly 300 physician residents annually. The College of Medicine is home to the Cancer Research Center, the Center for Outcomes Research and is a collaborator in Jump Simulation. Learn more about UICOMP at peoria.medicine.uic.edu/.

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