



Maintaining and Strengthening Childhood Vaccination During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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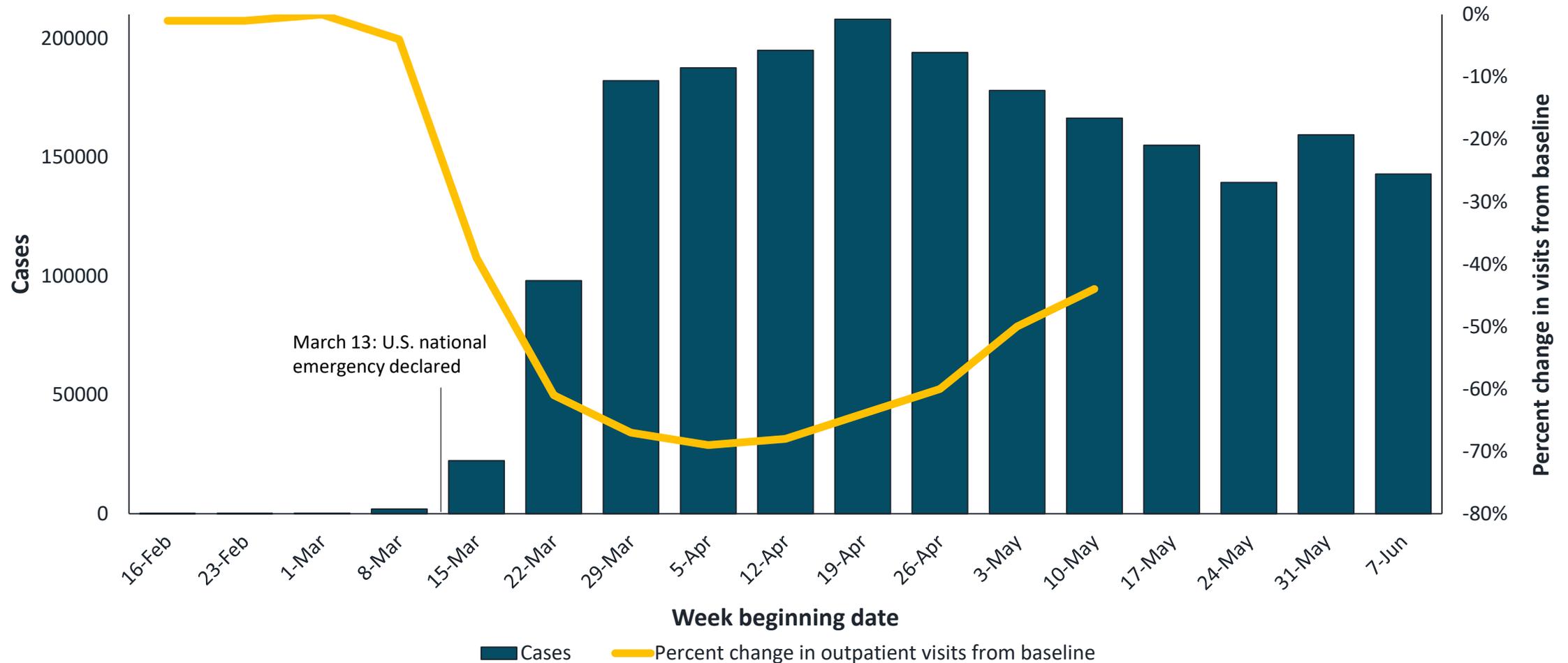
Director, Immunization Services Division

Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices

June 22, 2020

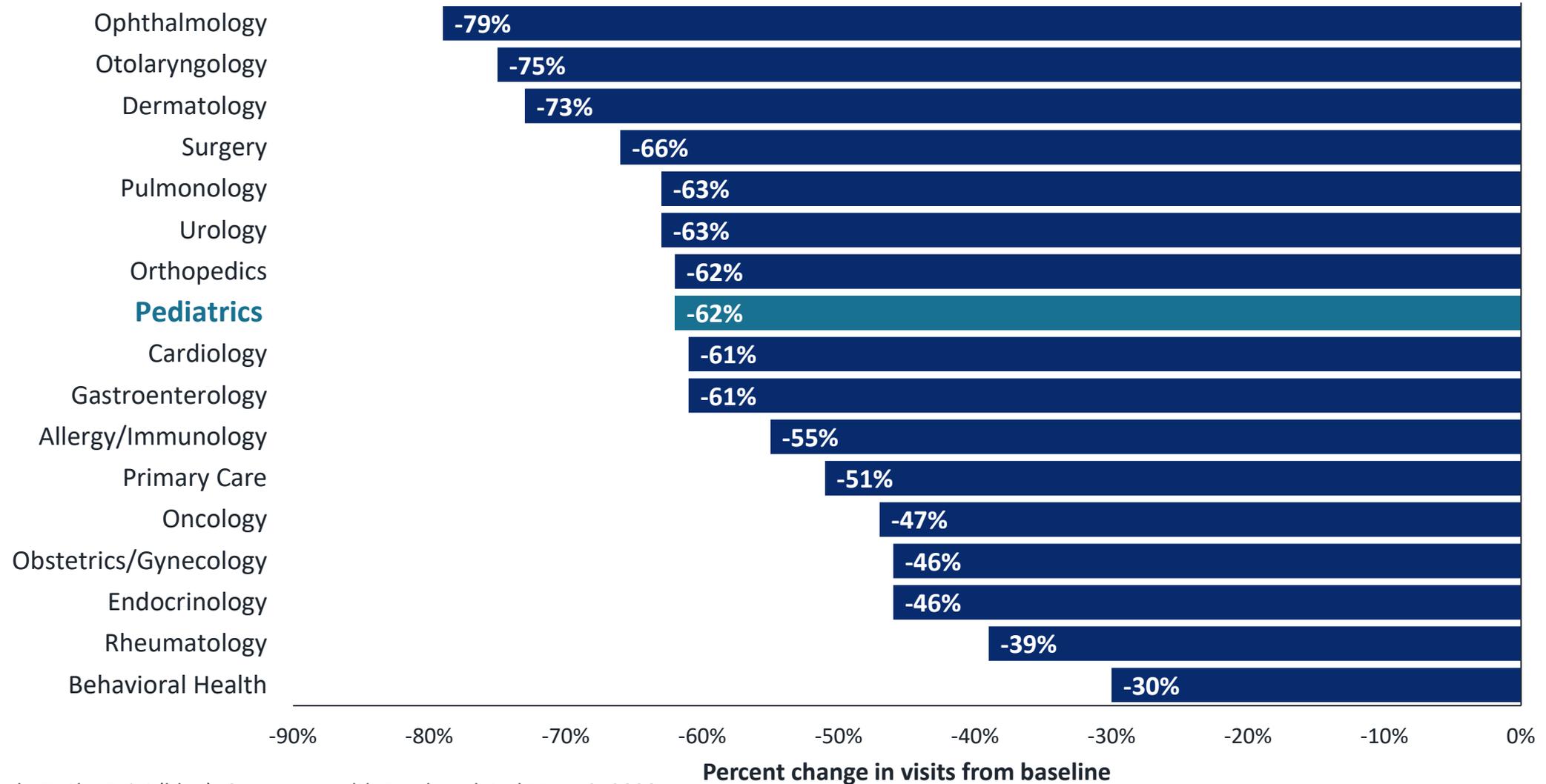
Substantial disruptions to outpatient medical care during COVID-19 pandemic

As number of COVID-19 cases increased and stay-at-home orders implemented, nearly 70% reduction in outpatient visits before starting to rebound



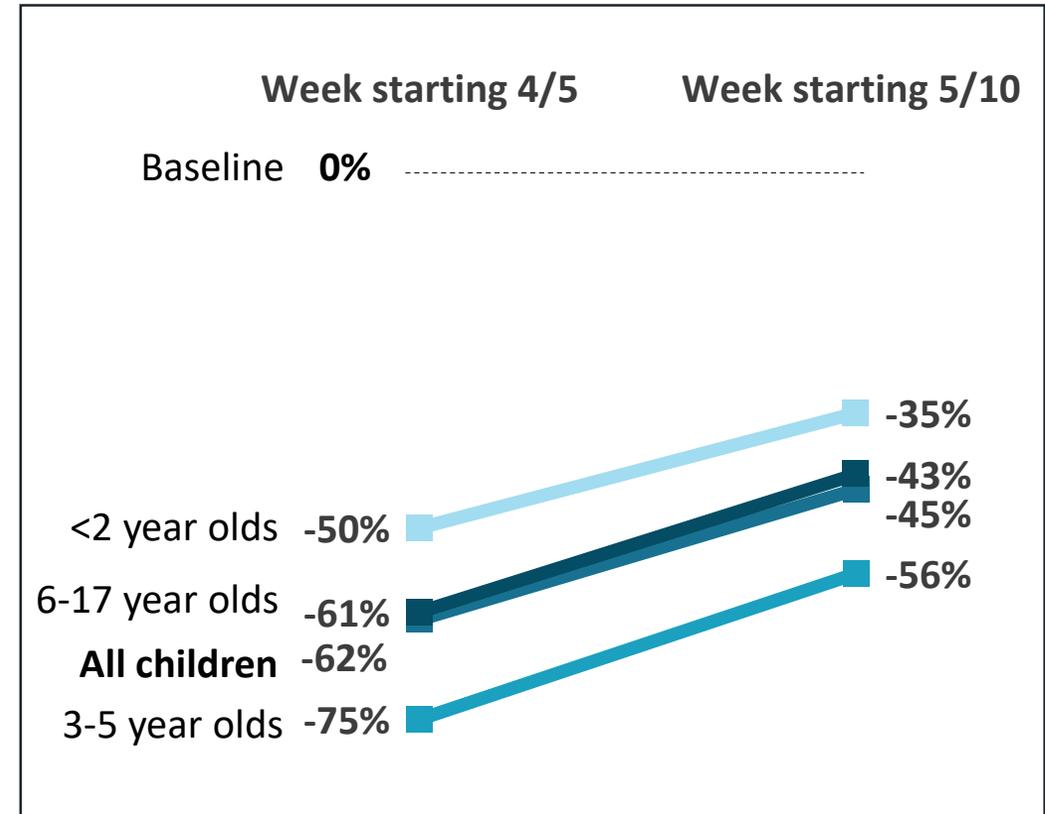
Pediatrics among the hardest-hit specialties

62% reduction in pediatric outpatient visits by April 5th



Increases in outpatient visits across all pediatric age groups in May compared to April

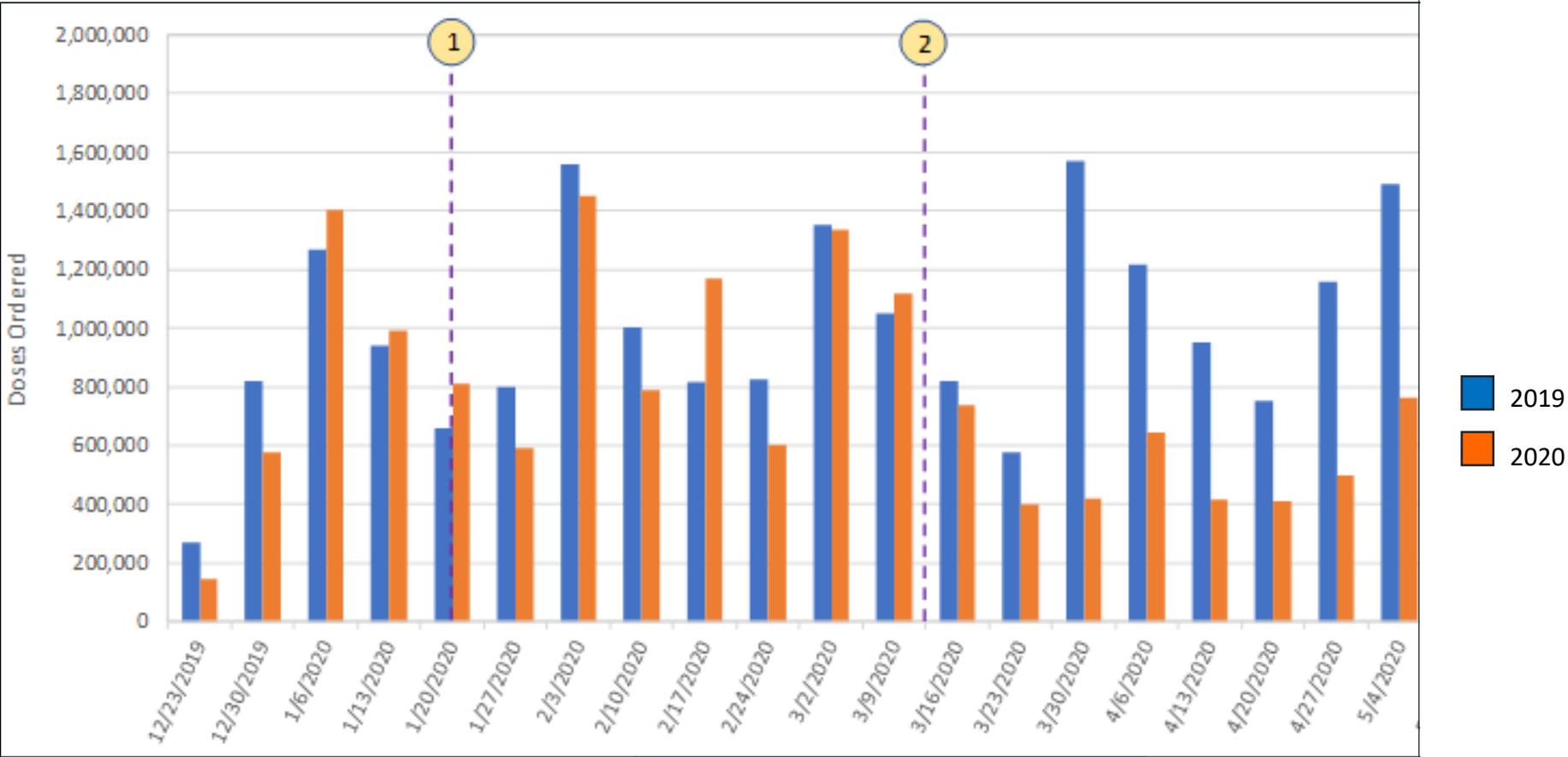
- Pediatric outpatient healthcare utilization improved in May, but remains well below baseline
- By May 10, pediatric outpatient visits:
 - Highest in children <2 years
 - Lowest in 3-5 year olds



COVID-19 pandemic and disruptions to routine childhood vaccination

Weekly decreases in Vaccines for Children program provider orders for pediatric vaccines – United States, December 23, 2019-May 10, 2020

All non-influenza vaccines



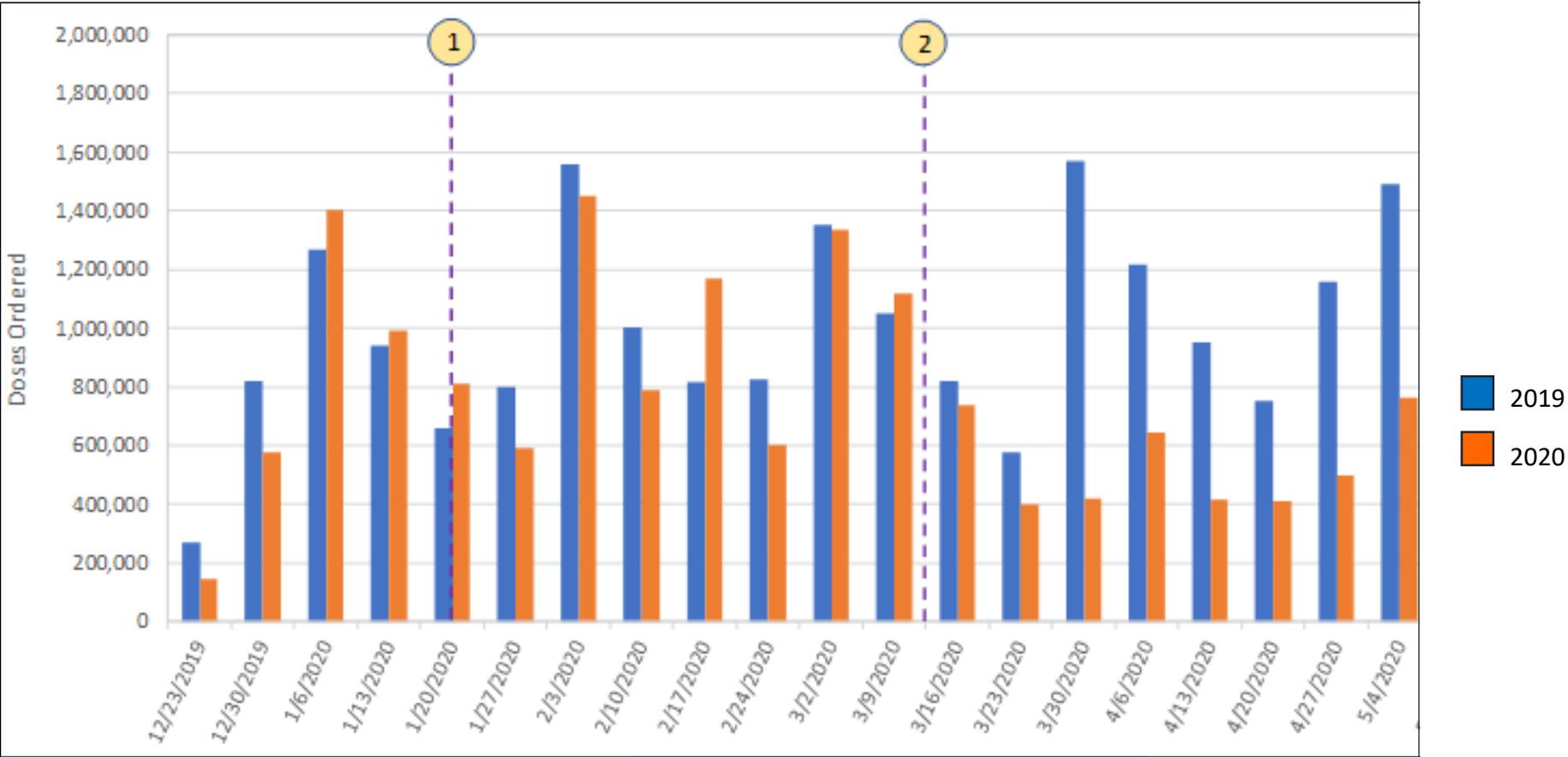
Notable Dates:
1 1/20/2020: First US case reported (Washington state)
2 3/13/2020: US national emergency declared

Source: CDC

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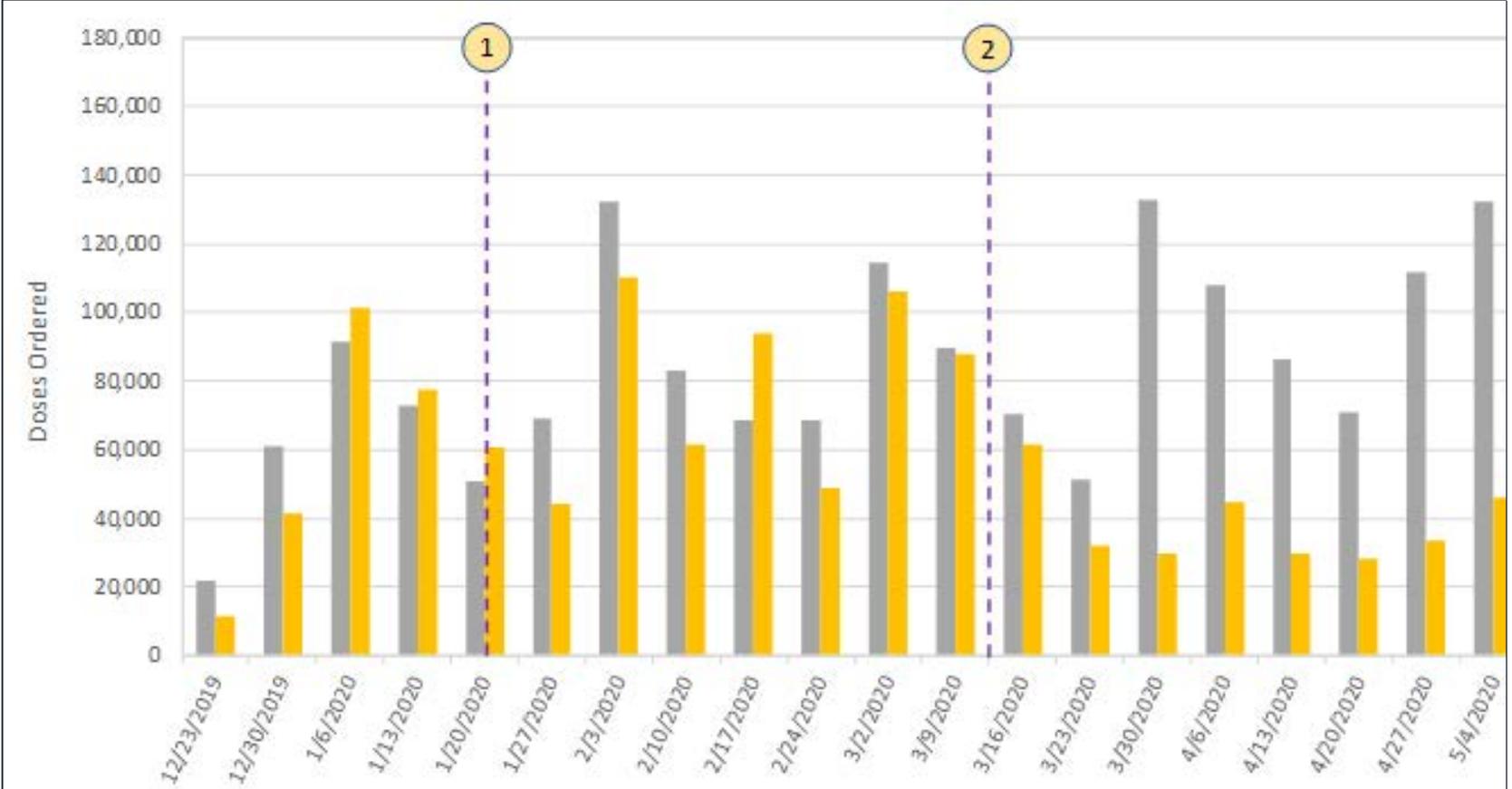
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Measles-containing vaccine



2019
2020

Notable Dates:
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Source: CDC

Primary care practices under stress

Economic struggles, reduced staffing, and low patient volume may all affect preventive care services

The Washington Post

Small medical practices struggle to survive amid coronavirus pandemic



Among a survey of primary care providers in early May

- **77%** report severe or close to severe stress
- **70%** report a >50% decrease in patient volume
- **40%** had laid off staff
- **40%** reporting absences due to illnesses/self-quarantine

Primary care collaborative survey, May 1-4, 2020 (n=773)

CDC activities with immunization programs and partners to support routine childhood vaccination

- **Monitor** vaccination service delivery to inform targeted interventions
- **Support**
 - Providers through the development of guidance and support materials
 - Catch-up vaccination through reminder/recall systems
 - Access to vaccines by identifying gaps in VFC provider network and increasing funding for VFC vaccine purchase and operations
 - Identification of policy interventions to support healthcare providers
- **Communicate**
 - Importance of vaccination to parents, providers, and partners
 - Information on VFC program to families
- **Plan** back-to-school vaccination activities during the summer and influenza vaccination in the fall

Supporting healthcare providers to deliver childhood vaccines

- Ensure providers are aware of available financial support through the Provider Relief Fund and how to apply for funding
 - As of June 9, now available to Medicaid and CHIP providers
- Promote catch-up vaccination through dissemination of information on best practices for reminder/recall, including refocusing of immunization program quality improvement activities
- Disseminate guidance on the safe delivery of vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic

CDC Interim Guidance for Immunization Services During COVID-19 Pandemic

- Vaccination is an essential medical service for all children and adolescents, ideally in the medical home
- Administer all due or overdue vaccines according to routine immunization schedule during the same visit
- Implement strategies to catch patients up on vaccines
 - Start with newborns, infants and children up to age 24 months, young children, and extending through adolescence
- Includes guidance for the safe delivery of vaccines (e.g., use of personal protective equipment, physical distancing)



Communicating the importance of well-child and vaccination visits

- Encourage parents to return for well-child visits
- Use reminder/recall systems to help children get up to date as quickly as possible
- Discuss the safety protocols put in place to ensure patients can be safely vaccinated

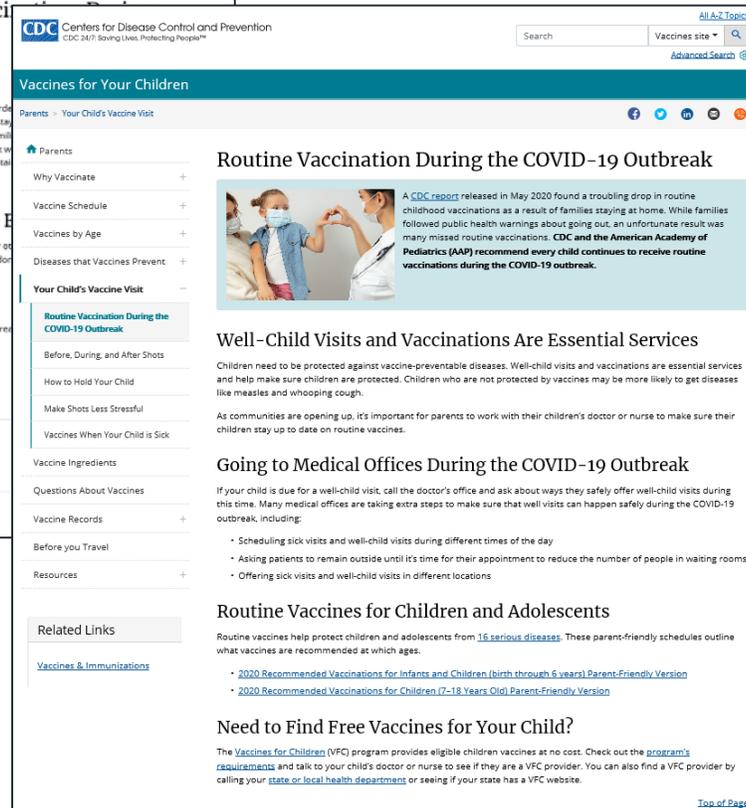
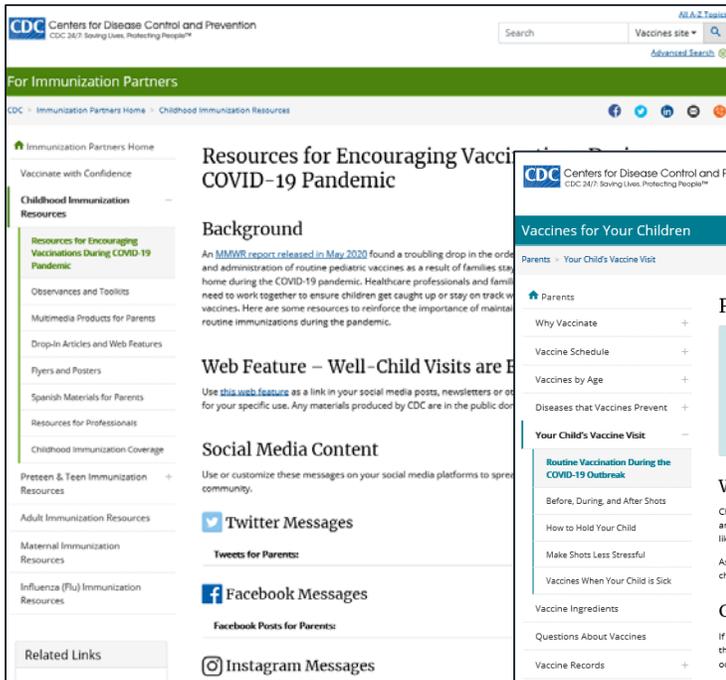


Promoting awareness of Vaccines for Children (VFC) program among parents

- Prior to the pandemic, ~50% of U.S. children eligible to receive free vaccines through VFC
 - More may be eligible now due to recent loss insurance or increased economic hardship
- Parents of recently-eligible children may not be aware of VFC
- Partners and providers can help improve vaccine access by increasing awareness and enrollment in VFC program



Resources for communicating with parents about routine vaccination during the COVID-19 pandemic

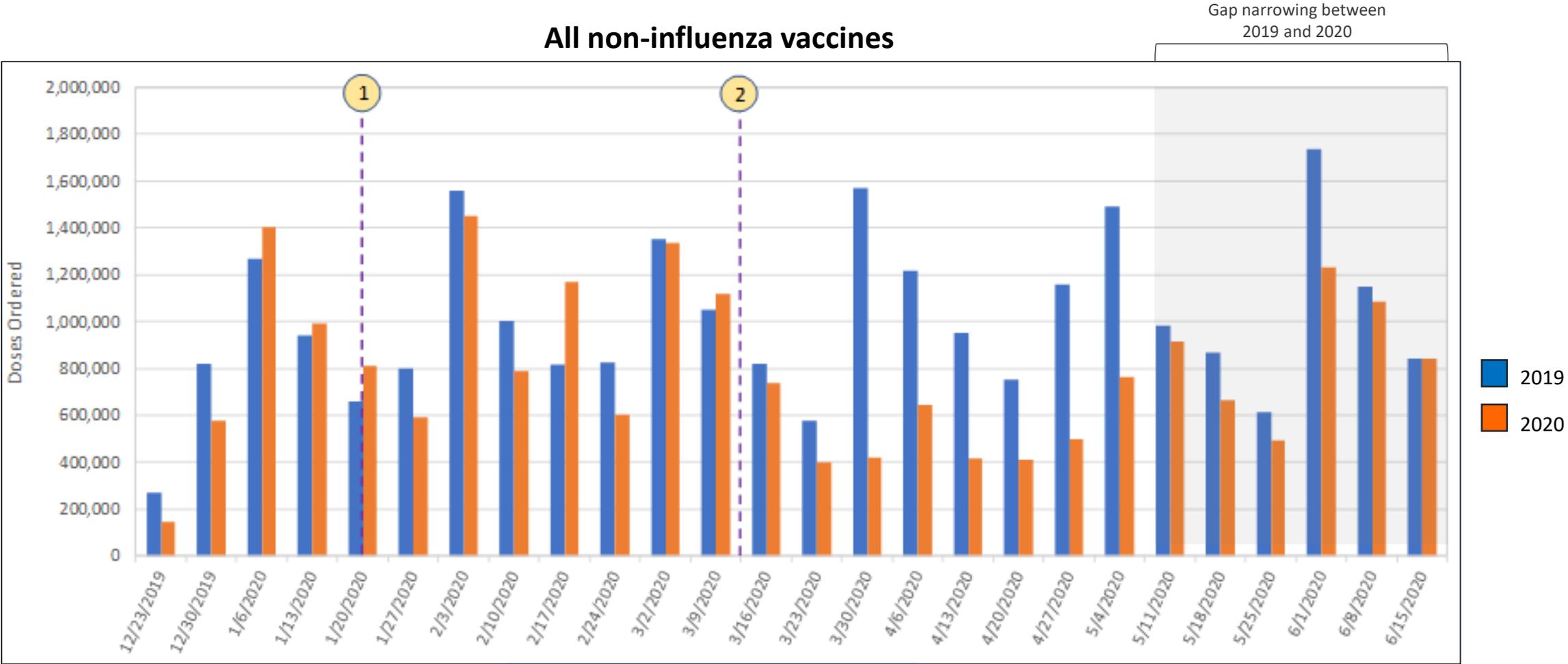


CDC resources for parents and immunization partners

AAP's #CallYourPediatrician campaign

Signs of recovery in routine childhood vaccination

Weekly Vaccines for Children program provider orders for pediatric vaccines – United States, December 23, 2019-June 21, 2020



Notable Dates:

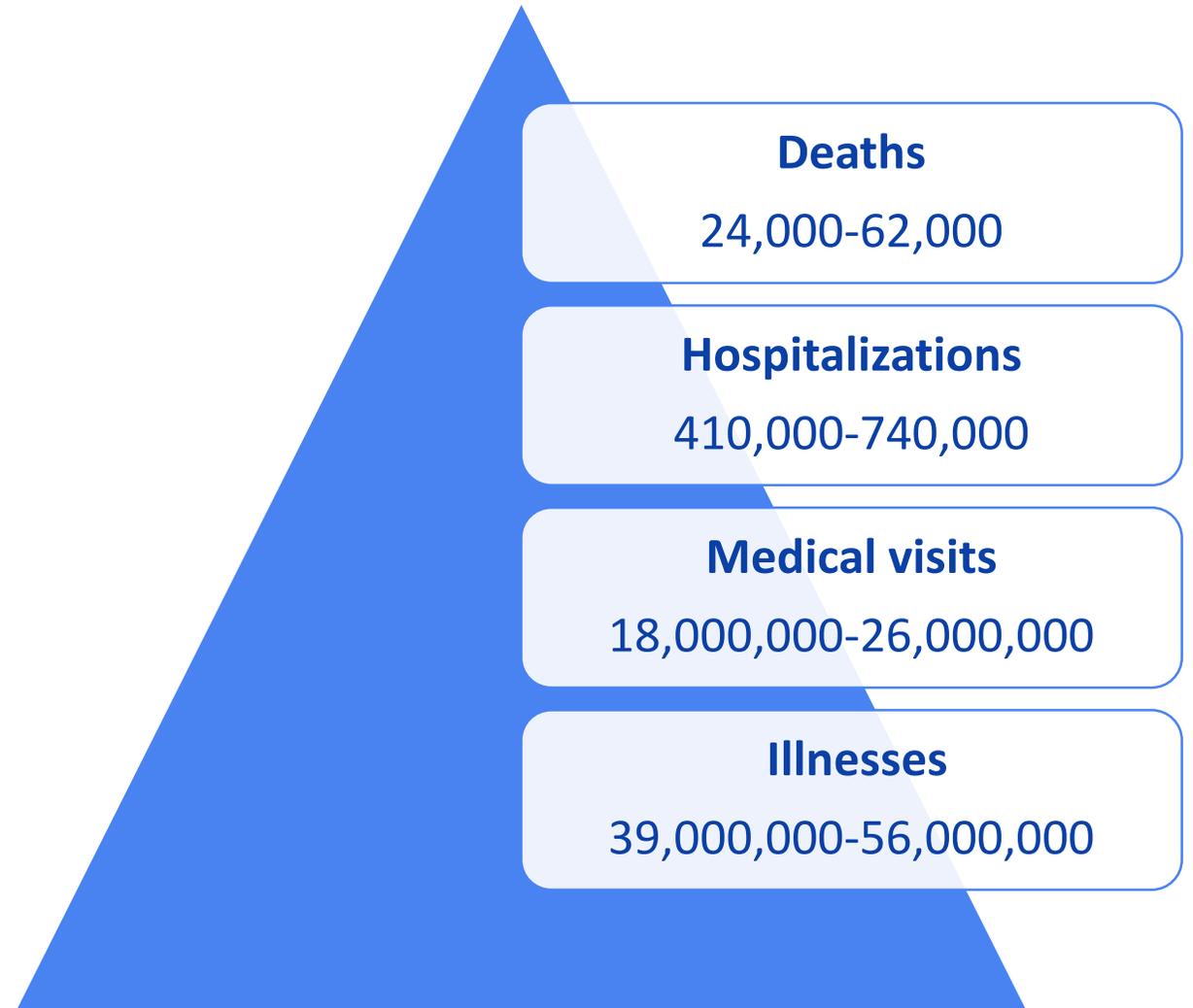
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Source: CDC

Influenza Vaccination, 2020-2021 Season

Summary of 2019-2020 influenza season

- Two consecutive waves
 - 1st wave predominantly influenza B/Victoria viruses
 - 2nd wave driven by influenza A (H1N1)
- Pediatric deaths reported to CDC for the 2019-2020 season: **185***



*As of June 13, 2020

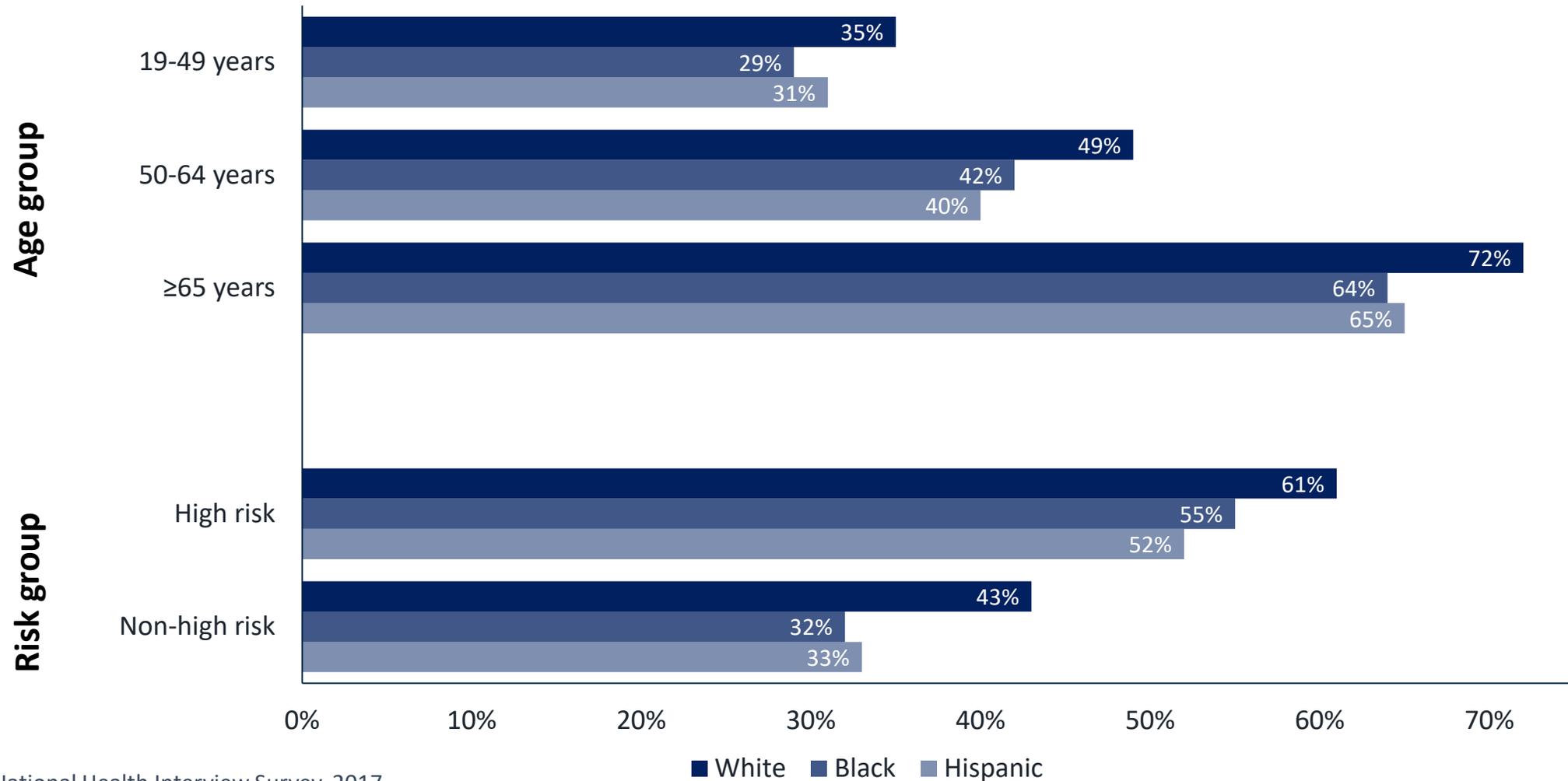
<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/burden/preliminary-in-season-estimates.htm>

Increasing seasonal influenza vaccine coverage to decrease healthcare utilization, 2020-2021

- We expect SARS-CoV-2 to continue to circulate in the fall
- Increasing influenza vaccine coverage will decrease stress on the healthcare system
 - Decrease doctor visits and hospitalizations
 - Decrease individuals needing diagnostic testing
- Focus on adults at higher risk from COVID-19
 - Staff and residents of long-term care facilities
 - Adults with underlying illnesses and African-Americans
 - Adults who are part of critical infrastructure

Racial and ethnic disparities in influenza coverage

Reducing existing disparities will be important to protect minority and at-risk populations for both influenza and future COVID-19 vaccines

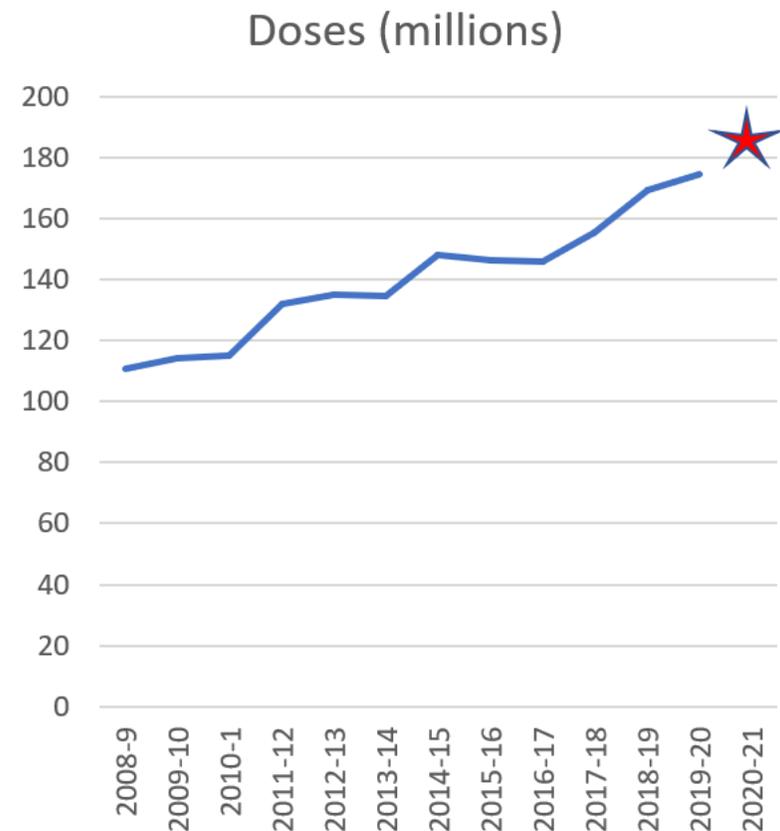


Source: National Health Interview Survey, 2017

Influenza vaccination planning for 2020-2021 season

- Maximize available vaccine supply
 - Expect >180M doses for U.S. market
- Operational considerations
 - Outreach to those at higher risk
 - Planning for potential need for social distancing
 - Extending influenza vaccination season (September through December or later)
- Enhancing communication
 - Align with COVID-19 messaging
 - Messaging for African-American and Hispanic communities

Influenza Vaccine Doses Distributed By Season, 2008-9 to 2019-20, and Projected, 2020-21



Supplemental Resources for Public Sector Influenza Vaccination for the 2020-2021 Influenza Season

- Two Components
 - Cooperative Agreement with 64 Immunization Program Awardees (2020-2021; \$140 million)
 - Supplemental influenza vaccine doses (2020; 7.1 million doses)
- Funding to support operational costs associated with planning and implementation of expanded influenza vaccination program extending into December or later
- Supplemental vaccine doses to be allocated among the awardees
 - Strong recommendation for awardee partnerships with Community Health Centers (CHCs)
 - Facilitating connections with CHCs through CDC relationship with the National Association of Community Health Centers

Conclusions

- Substantial disruptions to routine childhood vaccination services have occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, though signs of recovery are now being seen
- Catch up for childhood vaccination needs to be undertaken now so clinical capacity can be directed to back-to-school and influenza vaccination in the summer and fall
- Solutions to existing disparities in influenza vaccination should be sought and applied to COVID-19 vaccination
- Immunization programs, partners, and providers can help get childhood vaccination back on track by supporting catch-up vaccination efforts and communicating with parents about safe vaccination during the pandemic



Thank you

For more information, contact CDC
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 www.cdc.gov



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