

Should Every Medical College have a Dedicated Vaccination Clinic?

Annarao Kulkarni¹, Narayana Holla²

¹Professor and Head, Community Medicine Department, East Point College of Medical Sciences and Research Centre, Bangalore (National President Elect IAPSM)

²Professor Emeritus, Community Medicine Department, KVG Medical College and Hospital, Sullia, Dakshinakannada


Correspondence : Dr Annarao Kulkarni, Email: shrikulk55@yahoo.co.in

Vaccination has been proven to be one of the most effective health interventions available worldwide to prevent morbidity and mortality due to vaccine preventable diseases (VPDS). Global vaccination services had good coverage during 2022 yet 20.5 million children are still missing their life saving vaccines.^[1] Establishing a dedicated vaccination clinic especially in the private institutions could be one solution to further improve childhood as well as adult vaccination coverage. A dedicated vaccination clinic or centre is a specified premises within the institution for strict adherence to the “Rights” to be observed while administering vaccines to individuals for conferring both specific and extra-specific protection, to promote both innate and adaptive immunity for building strong population immunity. These clinics play a crucial role in public health efforts to control / eliminate / eradicate vaccine preventable diseases [VPDs]. They also provide a centralized and organized location for quality vaccination services. Their impact extends beyond individual health, contributing to the well-being of societies and global health efforts.

Key features of dedicated vaccination clinic:^[2,3]

- Vaccine administration: The primary function of a dedicated vaccination clinic is to administer vaccines to the beneficiaries from new born to geriatric age [life cycle approach]

- Vaccine procurement from the attached planning unit & storage in the proper cold chain: Proper storage of vaccines is crucial to maintain their effectiveness. These clinics are equipped with the necessary refrigeration and storage facilities to keep vaccines at the correct temperature.
- Health education: As these clinics are staffed with knowledgeable trained personnel, beneficiaries can elucidate their vaccination related queries and have a smooth uneventful vaccination experience. Appropriate health education and counselling regarding importance of vaccination and the expected Adverse-events will be provided by the staff. In teaching institutions, it is the nodal point for rolling out competent and confident health care service providers from nursing students to post graduate Medical Students through training & education.
- Accessibility: Apart from clinics at the facilities, EXCLUSIVE vaccination clinics can also be strategically located in easily accessible areas especially during public health emergencies (e.g- COVID-19 pandemic).
- Monitoring and Reporting: After vaccination, vaccinees will be observed for a short period of time to detect any immediate Adverse Events Following Immunization [AEFI]. AEFI if occurs; institution will follow AEFI protocol.

Quick Response Code	Access this article online	How to cite this article :
	Website : www.healthlinejournal.org	Kulkarni A, Holla N. Should Every Medical College have a Dedicated Vaccination Clinic? Healthline. 2023;14 (3): 171-173
	DOI : 10.51957/Healthline_558_2023	

Medical college and dedicated vaccination clinics:

Whether every medical college should have a dedicated vaccination clinic depends on several factors.

- **Resource Availability:**^[4] By default, teaching institutions have to mandatorily shoulder the responsibility of rolling-out competent and confident health care service providers. It necessitates proper premises, training materials [RI Handbook for MO's, COVID vaccination guidelines], exclusively trained staff, proper infrastructure and vaccine storage facilities. A medical college should assess its ability to allocate resources to support such a clinic effectively.
- **Regulatory and Licensing Requirements:**^[5] Medical colleges that meet the prescribed standards of local and national healthcare regulations can operate the vaccination clinic.
- **Institutes Educational Objectives:**^[6] Having a dedicated vaccination clinic in Medical College campus can be beneficial for practical training and hands-on experience in vaccine administration and immunization programs.
- **Community engagement:**^[7] For any medical college with a vision to serve the under served populations, to identify the healthcare needs in its locality and having a desire to be closely integrated with the local community, having a dedicated vaccination clinic can serve as a valuable asset.
- **Areas of interest:** Dedicated vaccination clinic will provide abundant opportunity for operational research and original research provides needy evidences for making relevant policies.

Benefits/impact of dedicated vaccination clinic:

- Routine Vaccination Services sustainably enhance "National Immunization coverage."^[8]
- Disease prevention thus reducing hospitalization and treatment expenses

- Timely response to outbreaks/emergency preparedness
- Increased training for healthcare personnel in vaccination
- AEFI surveillance
- Health education and counselling for the needy
- Proper vaccine storage

Barriers in establishing a dedicated vaccination clinic:

- Vaccine hesitancy in the community due to cultural barriers^[9]
- Location of the vaccination clinic itself can serve as a barrier
- Limited resources – shortage of trained health personnel or shortage in vaccine supply^[10]
- Cost of vaccination

Addressing these barriers requires a multifaceted approach that includes public health campaigns, community engagement, improved healthcare infrastructure and efforts to build trust in healthcare systems. Effective communication and collaboration among healthcare providers, public health agencies, and communities are essential to overcoming these challenges and promoting vaccination.

Recommendation:

Problems in setting up a dedicated vaccination clinic should be identified by establishing an exclusive Extended Supportive Supervision system for a sustained revolution through regular visits to both private and public sectors and solution to be reinforced through regular periodic continued medical education workshops, supporting operational research for simplification and by providing timely feedback and feed forward information.

Declaration:

Funding: Nil

Conflict of Interest: Nil

References:

1. Vaccination and immunization statistics [Internet]. 2023 [cited 2023 Sept 6]. Available from: <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-health/immunization/>
2. Pre-vaccination Clinic Activities [Internet]. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2022 [cited 2023 Sept 6]. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/mass-clinic-activities/pre-clinic-activities.html>
3. Post-vaccination clinic activities [Internet]. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2022 [cited 2023 Sept 6]. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/mass-clinic-activities/post-clinic-activities.html>
4. Vaccination Clinic Planning Activities [Internet]. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2022 [cited 2023 Sept 6]. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/mass-clinic-activities/planning-activities.html>
5. National vaccine policy book - Ministry of Health and Family Welfare [Internet]. [cited 2023 Sept 5]. Available from: <https://main.mohfw.gov.in/sites/default/files/108481119000.pdf>
6. Training Health Workers Improves children immunization services [Internet]. 2022 [cited 2023 Sept 6]. Available from: <https://www.unicef.org/yemen/stories/training-health-workers-improves-children-immunization-services>
7. Kompithra RZ, R M, Mathew LG, Verghese VP, John TJ. A High Volume, User-Friendly Immunization Clinic in Vellore, India: A Model for Urban Hospitals. *Jl*. 2016 Mar 20;1(1):1-8.
8. De Sarro C, Papadopoli R, Cautela V, Nobile CGA, Pileggi C, Pavia M. Vaccination coverage among health-care workers: pre-post intervention study to assess impact of an on-site vaccination-dedicated clinic. *Expert Review of Vaccines*. 2021 Jun 3;20(6):753-9.
9. Costantino C, Caracci F, Brandi M, Bono SE, Ferro A, Sannasardo CE, et al. Determinants of vaccine hesitancy and effectiveness of vaccination counseling interventions among a sample of the general population in Palermo, Italy. *Human Vaccines & Immunotherapeutics*. 2020 Oct 2; 16(10):2415-21.
10. Hinman AR, Orenstein WA, Santoli JM, Rodewald LE, Cochi SL. Vaccine shortages: history, impact, and prospects for the future. *Annu Rev Public Health*. 2006;27:235-59.