

## An Evaluation of an Interactive Social Media Website for Parents who are Concerned about Immunizing their Children

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<b>Organization:</b>	Kaiser Foundation Research Institute
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<b>AHRQ Funding Amount:</b>	\$165,301
<b>Summary Status as of:</b>	December 2010

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**Target Population:** Adults, Other Conditions: Pertussis, Varicella, Measles

**Summary:** Immunizations are one of the most significant public health achievements of the 20th century, preventing more than 2 million deaths per year worldwide. However, as the incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases has declined, public concern has shifted from disease transmission to vaccine safety. An increasing number of parents in developed countries now believe the risks of vaccines outweigh their benefits. Research has shown that parents who decline or delay immunizations greatly increase their children's risk of pertussis (whooping cough), varicella (chicken pox), and measles infections. Research also shows that the health information that vaccine-hesitant parents obtain from the Internet is often inaccurate and biased.

Effective intervention strategies to reduce parental concerns about immunizations are needed. The objective of this study is to develop and evaluate an interactive, social media Web site for parents who are concerned about vaccines. The Web site will feature various social media applications, including a blog, a discussion forum, and a social networking service. It will also be a resource for providers who are interested in obtaining information about the latest vaccine-related concerns and discussing vaccine-related topics with parents.

The Web site will be piloted among patients and physicians of Kaiser Permanente Colorado (KPCO), a closed-panel, group-model health maintenance organization that provides integrated health care services to the Denver-Boulder metropolitan area. The Web site will be moderated by physicians and vaccine researchers at the KPCO Institute for Health Research. Use of the Web site will be qualitatively and quantitatively assessed over time and will include a longitudinal assessment of the pilot cohort's knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about immunizations. This pilot investigation will inform future research to implement a larger, integrated behavioral health intervention to reduce parental concerns about vaccinations and increase immunization rates.

### Specific Aims:

- Design and develop an interactive, social media Web site devoted to immunizations. **(Ongoing)**
- Conduct a qualitative, formative evaluation of the social media Web site using focus groups. **(Ongoing)**
- Qualitatively and quantitatively evaluate Web site usability through one-on-one testing sessions with end users. **(Ongoing)**

- Pilot test the social media Web site with a representative cohort of end users over a 6-month followup period. **(Upcoming)**

**2010 Activities:** The project was initiated in September 2010. Institutional Review Board approval was obtained to conduct focus groups and usability testing of the Web site. The development of the interactive social media Web site is in progress. Vandiver Group, Inc. is building the Web site and KPCO is writing the content.

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**Grantee's Most Recent Self-Reported Quarterly Status (as of December 2010):** The project is meeting all milestones on time and is somewhat under-budget to conserve funds for later cost intensive activities.

**Preliminary Impact and Findings:** This project has no findings to date.

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**Strategic Goal:** Develop and disseminate health IT evidence and evidence-based tools to improve health care decisionmaking through the use of integrated data and knowledge management.

**Business Goal:** Knowledge Creation