

## **A Closer Look at the Pediatrics PRN**

### Overview of the PRN

Members of the Pediatrics Practice and Research Network (PRN) are passionate about kids. The membership encompasses practitioners caring for kids across the age continuum from neonates to adolescents. The Pediatrics PRN encourages the early engagement of student, resident, and fellow members and invites them to take advantage of the educational and networking opportunities offered within the PRN. The Pediatrics PRN has significantly grown in membership over the past few years and currently has 1083 members, including 401 students, 61 residents, and 8 fellows. The PRN aims to promote the education and networking of its members. The business of the PRN is divided among several committees: Travel Award, Nominations, Education, Professional Advancement, Research, and Social Media. Each committee has various responsibilities, as outlined on the PRN's website at [https://www.accp.com/stunet/prncorner.aspx#ctl00\\_pnlPediatrics\\_title](https://www.accp.com/stunet/prncorner.aspx#ctl00_pnlPediatrics_title).

Many of the Pediatrics PRN's members are leaders in the field of pediatric pharmacy. PRN members work in a variety of settings, including critical care, ambulatory care, infectious diseases, neonatology, nutrition support, academia, pulmonology, emergency medicine, and general medicine. Members contribute regularly to the profession through publications and poster and platform presentations. The PRN is also honored that two of its members are serving on the ACCP Board of Regents. Marcia Buck is the current ACCP president-elect, and Tracy Hagemann is serving on the Board of Regents. Pediatrics PRN members were also heavily involved with and successful in getting Pediatric Pharmacy recognized by the Board of Pharmacy Specialties as one of the newest recognized specialties.

### Opportunities and Resources for Student, Resident, and Fellow Members

The Pediatrics PRN encourages the participation of students, residents, and fellows. One of the easiest ways to get involved is to serve on one of the committees listed above. Additional information is located on the website. The opportunity to sign up for these committees is initially extended during the Pediatrics PRN business meeting at the ACCP Annual Meeting, but students, residents, and fellows are encouraged to get involved at any time by e-mailing the respective committee chair or one of the PRN's officers.

The PRN also offers two \$1000 travel awards, for which both students and residents/fellows are eligible to apply. In addition to financial assistance to attend the ACCP Annual Meeting, awardees will have the opportunity to present their research during the Pediatrics PRN business meeting while at the meeting. This will provide an avenue for the PRN to foster professional development in its student, resident, and fellow members.

Because pediatrics is considered a specialty area, the importance of networking is a top priority for the Pediatrics PRN. One of the new things PRN members have developed through the efforts of the PRN's Professional Advancement Committee is a tri-fold brochure outlining the steps to take in pursuing a career in pediatric pharmacy. Another feature currently implemented by the PRN is its mentorship group, pairing student/resident/fellow members with practicing pharmacist members. These pairings will be assigned before the ACCP Annual Meeting with the hope of providing a point person for meeting attendees to sit with during the PRN's business meeting. This will provide better networking opportunities for the PRN's student, resident, and fellow members.

### Current Clinical Issue

A pediatric pharmacist plays an important role in vaccinations. Maintaining up-to-date knowledge on vaccine recommendations is very important, given that these recommendations are constantly changing as more research is done and new information is released. A decision was made on June 22, 2016, by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with respect to influenza vaccine recommendations for use in children for the upcoming 2016–2017 influenza season. The ACIP voted 13-1 that live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) should not be used.<sup>1</sup>

Previously, the ACIP had recommended LAIV as the preferred influenza vaccine for use in children. However, during the past three influenza seasons, studies have shown that LAIV is not effective. In the 2013–2014 influenza season, the ACIP reported low effectiveness in children receiving LAIV. The primary strain circulating in that season was the 2009 pandemic influenza A (H1N1). This ineffectiveness was again noted in the 2014–2015 influenza season, with the primary circulating strain identified as influenza A (H3N2). In the most recent 2015–2016 influenza season, the 2009 pandemic influenza A (H1N1) strain in circulation reemerged. Preliminary data from the most recent influenza season suggest a 3% effectiveness rate (95% confidence interval, -49% to 37%) for LAIV in children 2–17 years of age compared with 63% (95% confidence interval, 52%–72%) for inactivated influenza vaccine (IIV) against any influenza strain.

This recent recommendation will likely be upsetting for some families because LAIV is the only non-injectable vaccine available, but with the dismal efficacy rates reported, the ACIP could not continue to recommend its use. The ACIP has formally recommended that IIV or recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV) be used for the upcoming 2016–2017 influenza season in all individuals 6 months and older.

Reference:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). ACIP Votes Down Use of LAIV for 2016-2017 Flu Season. Available at [www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2016/s0622-laiv-flu.html](http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2016/s0622-laiv-flu.html). Accessed June 23, 2016.

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