

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about... Immunization Registries (Health Care Providers)

What is an immunization registry? What is CAIR?

An immunization registry is a secure web-based database that can store your patients' immunization records. A registry helps medical practices keep their patients vaccinated on time, avoiding under- or over-immunization. All 50 states have immunization registries. Our California Immunization Registry is also known as **CAIR**. California has [10 regional CAIR affiliates](#) that cover the state. CAIR users pay nothing for software, training and help desk support.

Who can use CAIR?

CAIR can only be used by authorized medical office staff, hospitals, and public health departments for the purposes of evaluating shot records, sending reminders, billing, and protecting the public health. Programs such as WIC, child care, schools, foster care, and CalWORKS may also be authorized to view shot histories for the children they serve.

What can CAIR do for my practice? Will it increase my staff's busy workload?

CAIR **reduces** the staff time needed to:

- search for or replace patient immunization records
- provide records ("yellow cards" and "blue cards,") for school, camp, or other activities
- calculate which vaccines are due
- give "just-in-case" immunizations when earlier shot records are missing
- request shot records from other providers
- prepare reminder notices, and
- track vaccine inventory--including separate tracking for VFC vaccine supplies.

Immunization registry software works quickly and efficiently in a variety of clinic settings. The software has a high satisfaction rate. [Testimonials from medical office staff](#) affirm these advantages. Your regional CAIR representative can help assess your office workflow to maximize CAIR benefits for your practice.

What if our immunization rates are high already, should my practice join the registry?

CAIR:

- saves staff time and helps your patients
- consolidates records when children have been immunized by different providers.
- keeps children up-to-date by making rapid, accurate assessments of the increasingly complex vaccine schedule.
- accurately tracks your practice's coverage rates; informal estimates by providers of their practice's rates may overestimate true coverage.
- improves immunization rates, whether high or low. Just one function of the registry, providing routine reminder notices to families, has been shown to raise rates by 17%.

What computer equipment is needed?

Most computers with Internet access are adequate for registry use. CAIR representatives can evaluate your current system technology, identify any gaps, and direct you, as needed, to lower-cost options for equipment and Internet service.

Who will train our staff to use the registry?

Registry representatives can schedule free training for your staff at your convenience. [Registry software is very user-friendly](#), requiring no prior computer skills. Free Help Desk services are available to answer questions as they arise.

What if data entry errors occur after training? How do we ensure data accuracy?

CAIR software has built-in quality assurance features. Validation procedures identify inaccurate or missing data entered into the registry. CAIR staff can help you correct data.

How will the registry program integrate with our existing computer systems?

CAIR is currently being used successfully in practices both with and without electronic medical record and billing systems. There are several ways to transfer data between systems that will become increasingly available. Please contact your local CAIR representative about the feasibility of electronic data transfer.

Are patients' records in CAIR kept secure?

CAIR [complies with HIPAA and state law](#) to protect patient privacy. Providers and CAIR staff must abide by confidentiality agreements in order to share patient records. Each viewing of patient records is tracked to maintain an "audit trail." Moreover, CAIR software has security features to protect confidential data from being seen by unauthorized sources.

Some families might not like the idea of a registry. What are their options?

Families have the choice of whether their children are recorded in CAIR. [All parents or guardians must be notified](#) before their children's records are entered into CAIR. In practice, few families have chosen to not participate after this notification. Participating families also have the choice whether to receive reminders and to inspect their children's registry records for accuracy.

Can I access patient records from another part of California?

[Check with your regional CAIR representative](#). Data are currently shared within each of California's 10 regional CAIR affiliate registries. Over the next years the regions will be electronically linked. This will enable a participating provider anywhere in California to receive patient immunization data from any of the state's regions.

How do we maintain control of our patients' records? Will other practices be able lure away our patients?

Your patients' immunization records are protected by security measures as well as by agreements signed by all providers participating in CAIR. Providers must use specific identifying information to search for children in the registry and cannot browse through all records.

Where can I learn more about CAIR?

Additional information about CAIR and regional CAIR affiliates can be found at www.CAIRWeb.org.

