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2020 CDC Releases New Vaccine-Associated Adverse Events ESSENCE Query

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Hello All,

On December 11, 2020, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommended the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for persons in the United States age 16 years and older. To ensure that the benefits outweigh the risks for persons who receive the vaccine, several vaccine safety monitoring systems are in place to watch for possible side effects (adverse events): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety.html>.

To further support these systems, state and local partners of the National Syndromic Surveillance Program (NSSP) have expressed interest in exploring the use of emergency department (ED) data to monitor safety. In response and to assist in these efforts, CDC NSSP has released the first version of a query designed to identify mentions of adverse events after recent vaccination (VAE) during ED visits or in ambulatory healthcare settings. This query (syntax attached)—**CDC Vaccine-Associated Adverse Events v1** can be found in the ESSENCE "CC and DD Category" field.

The query includes a broad combination of diagnosis codes (ICD-10, ICD-9, and SNOMED) and chief complaint terms to detect visits potentially related to an adverse reaction after recent vaccination (e.g., poisoning, anaphylactic reaction, infection, post-vaccination fever, meningoencephalitis). This query does not attempt to identify specific clinical outcomes.

Given that discharge diagnosis can lag after chief complaint and is occasionally less complete, the NSSP team included chief complaint terms to improve timeliness and provide detailed reason-for-visit information. The chief complaint terms are designed to be more *sensitive* than *specific* and could identify ED visits unrelated to a recent vaccination or associated adverse event.

For more information on applying this query to ED data in your public health jurisdiction, e-mail nssp@cdc.gov.

Thank you

NSSP Support Team

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