

## Press Release

### **Adult Vaccination Healthcare Provider Education Program**

**August 2023 – Toronto, Ontario**

The International Federation on Ageing (IFA) is proud to announce the second edition of the “Adult Vaccination Healthcare Provider ECHO” globally. This innovative program aims to help build the capacity and capability of diverse healthcare providers as champions of adult immunization to improve rates of vaccination and save lives.

Vaccination is one of the most effective public health interventions of our time and key to maintaining well-being in older age. Despite the known benefits of vaccination for adults, rates among this population remain suboptimal and counter to fostering healthy ageing.<sup>i</sup> While there is a necessary focus on childhood vaccination, the same cannot be said for older adults. This rapidly growing global population is confronted with a universal lack of prioritization, substantial barriers to access, and little or no targeted promotion to inform them of the serious, life-altering complications of vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs), such as influenza, pneumococcal pneumonia, shingles and pertussis.<sup>ii</sup>

Healthcare providers (HCPs), civil society, patient associations, and advocacy groups, alongside thought leaders represent key stakeholders with the ability to impact adult vaccination uptake rates through direct interaction with at-risk populations, including older people, patients, and caregivers.

Using the proven ECHO Model for Mentorship, this Program will help improve skills of healthcare providers to educate, promote and talk about adult immunization. The ECHO Model™, with more than 860 ECHO networks in 44 countries and training more than 148,000 learners in more than 30,000 organizations, has been leveraged across many fields including education and social justice.<sup>iii,iv</sup> Using this proven model for mentorship, participants will share knowledge and learn from leading experts and peers through participatory learning and dialogue.

The Adult Vaccination Health Care Professional Education ECHO Program uses a bottom-up approach to ensure stakeholders working at the front line alongside at-risk populations can be equipped with practical knowledge and tools to drive forward adult vaccination advocacy and clinical practice, and perhaps be inspired to make meaningful contributions to national and subnational immunization programs.

Registration for this Program is now open, with bi-weekly sessions from 18 October – 13 December 2023 at 9 am EST: <https://ow.ly/mrfj50PCVeG>

#### **Media Contact**

For more information or interview opportunities, please contact Ms. Emma Schmidt, Project and Policy Coordinator at [eschmift@ifa.ngo](mailto:eschmift@ifa.ngo)

## About the International Federation on Ageing (IFA)

IFA is an international, non-governmental organization (NGO) with a unique membership base comprising government, NGOs, academics, industry, and individuals in over 80 countries. Over the last 45 years, the IFA has become known as a leading and innovative organization that works across disciplines and sectors toward common goals that improve the lives of older people.

Improving rates of vaccination for globally is a priority of IFA, as a key contributor to healthy ageing. The IFA, across almost a decade, and through the [Vaccines4Life](#) program, has worked alongside committed organizations to address barriers to improve adult vaccination rates in the context of healthy ageing.

As a non-State actor at the World Health Organization (WHO) and with general consultative status at the United Nations and its agencies, the IFA is in the position to advocate directly with Member States and contribute to and inform intergovernmental dialogue.

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<sup>i</sup> Doherty, T. M., Connolly, M. P., Del Giudice, G., Flamaing, J., Goronzy, J. J., Grubeck-Loebenstien, B., ... & Di Pasquale, A. (2018). Vaccination programs for older adults in an era of demographic change. *European geriatric medicine*, 9(3), 289-300.

<sup>ii</sup> de Gomensoro, E., Del Giudice, G., & Doherty, T. M. (2018). Challenges in adult vaccination. *Annals of medicine*, 50(3), 181-192.

<sup>iii</sup> Zhou, C., Crawford, A., Serhal, E., Kurdyak, P., & Sockalingam, S. (2016). The impact of project ECHO on participant and patient outcomes: a systematic review. *Academic Medicine*, 91(10), 1439-1461.

<sup>iv</sup> Madden, E. F., Kalishman, S., Zurawski, A., O'Sullivan, P., Arora, S. and Komaromy, M. (2020). Strategies used by interprofessional teams to counter healthcare marginalization and engage complex patients. *Qualitative health research*, 30(7), 1058–1071.