



Supporting Vaccine Confidence Through Community-Engaged Health Communication in the Navajo Nation

(MSPH Capstone Proposal, NNR-26.583)

VaxUp: Supporting Vaccine Confidence in Two Service Units in the Navajo Nation (Parent Study: NNR-24.524)

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Photos by Ed Cunicelli

Public Health Significance



High disease burden among American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities

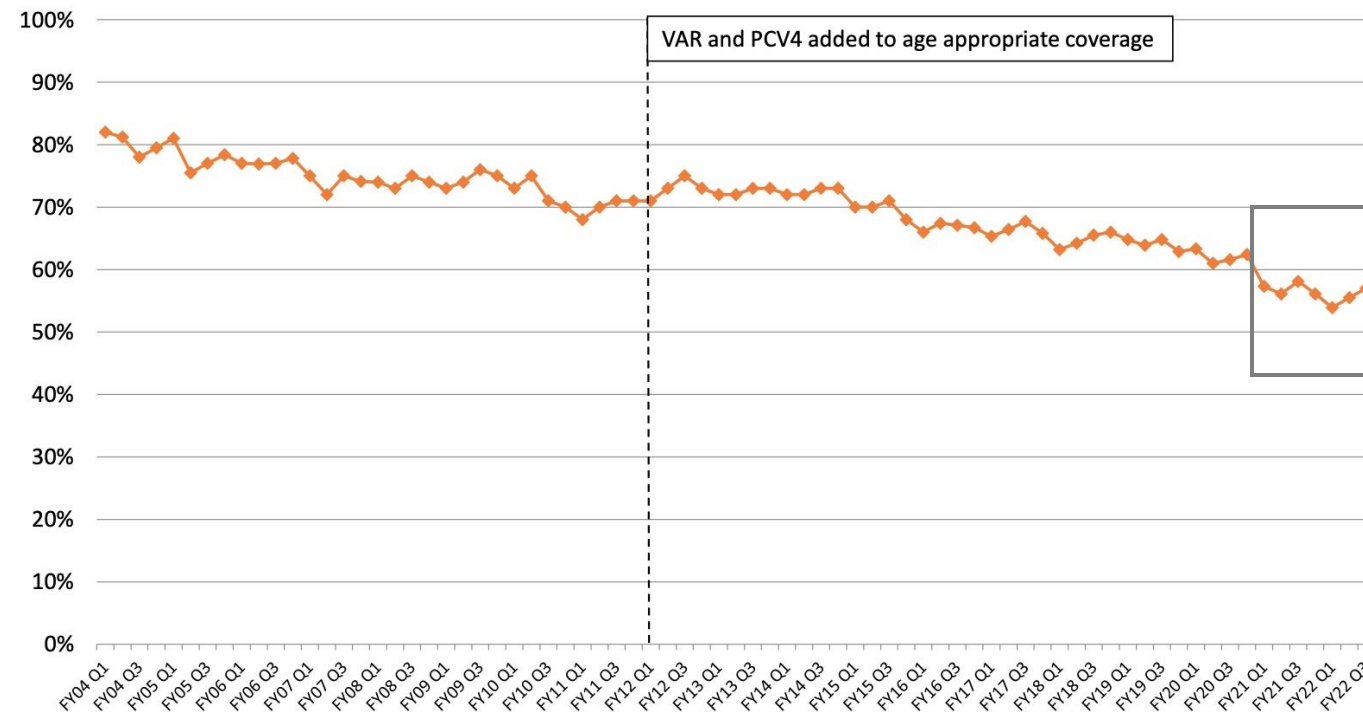
Incidence rates of influenza and pneumonia **are 1.8x as high among AI/AN**

Pneumonia **hospitalization rates increased** between 1998 and 2014 in AI/AN populations

AI/AN children have among the **world's highest rates of hospitalization** from RSV

Immunization coverage has declined in AI/AN children

Age-Appropriate Immunization Coverage 3-27 month olds (IHS National)



Nationally, rates of **full immunization coverage in Native children dropped** from more than 80% to less than 60% among pediatric (3-27 months) populations cared for at Indian Health Service facilities between 2004 and 2022.



Immunization can reduce disease
and **increase health equity** in
AI/AN communities

Overview of the Parent Study: VaxUp



Parent study – VaxUp (NNR.24-524)

A study to **optimize vaccine uptake** in children, adults, and elders and build community health worker research capacity in two service units of the Navajo Nation via **3 key aims**:

1 Understand **Supply-Side Components** of Under-Immunization with **Health Care Workers**

2 Understand **Demand-Side Vaccine Confidence** Determinants with **Community Members**

3 Support and Deliver **Educational and Communication Toolkits**

Capstone Focus

Study Activities & Community Participation

Aim 1: Healthcare workers

- Surveys (electronic)
- Focus Group Discussion (process mapping & prioritization)
- In-depth interviews

Aim 2: Community members

- Surveys (phone)
- Focus Group Discussions (River of Life & message testing)
- In-depth interviews

Advisory boards reviewed study priorities, design, and materials via:

- 2 Community Advisory Board (CAB) meetings

Community Health Workers trained to assist with:

- Participant recruitment
- Survey collection
- In-depth interviewing
- Focus group facilitation

Capstone Focus



Secondary Analysis of Community Focus Groups

Explores how **community-identified** priorities and experiences can facilitate the development of meaningful **health communication strategies** that support vaccine confidence among two service units in the Navajo Nation

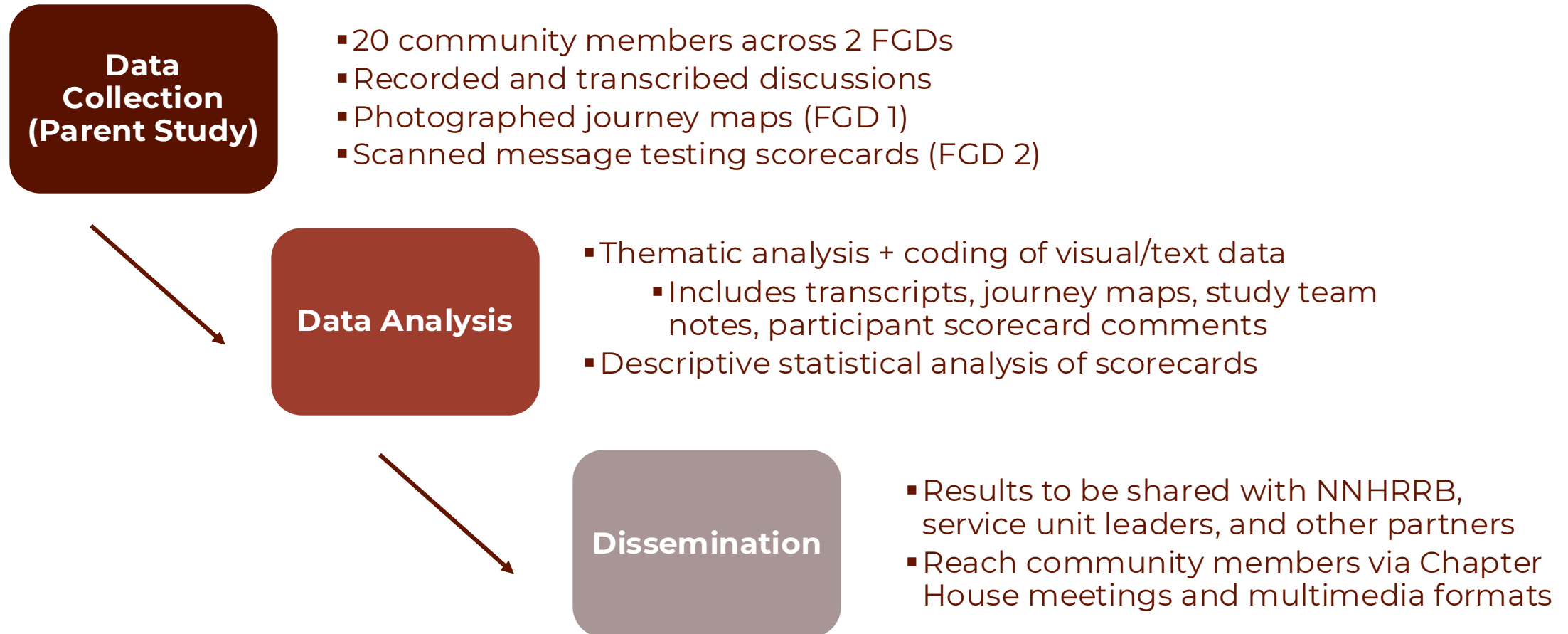
FGD 1: River of Life Journey Mapping

Explored barriers and facilitators to routine vaccination through the River of Life reflective exercise

FGD 2: Message Testing

Informed refinement of health communications materials designed using insights from FGD 1

Data and Dissemination



Key materials submitted

1) Cover Sheet	Page 3-4
2) NNHRRB Proposal Abstract	Page 5-6
3) NNHRRB Research Protocol Application	Page 7-13
4) References	Page 14-15
5) PI Certifications and CV	Page 16-27
6) Letter of Support from PI of Parent Study (NNR-24.524)	Page 28-29
7) Master's Capstone Research Approval Form	Page 30-34
8) Approvals and Letters for Support for Parent Study	Page 35-50
9) Copies of Consent Forms from Parent Study	Page 51-59
10) Copies of Approved Data Collection forms from Parent Study	Page 60-92

Thank you

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Chelsea Kettering, DrPH and Laura Hammitt, MD

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IRBs: Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
Navajo Nation Human Research Review Board

