The Standards for Adult Immunization Practice, revised by the NVAC in 2013, advises all healthcare professionals to take steps to help ensure that their adult patients are fully immunized. The standards recommend the following actions by healthcare professionals:

1. Assess patients’ immunization status during every clinical encounter
2. Recommend vaccines that patients need
3. Administer vaccines or refer patients to providers who do vaccinate
4. Document vaccines received by patients

Help Increase Vaccination Rates Among Adults

Adult vaccination rates are extremely low. In fact, most adults are not aware that they even need vaccines. The strongest predictor of vaccinations among adults is whether or not they have discussed vaccination with their healthcare professional. There may be many additional opportunities to vaccinate adults who need them during routine health assessments.

The NVAC was established in 1987 to advise and make recommendations to the Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services in his/her capacity as the director of the National Vaccine Program on ways to achieve optimal prevention of human infectious diseases through vaccine development. The NVAC also provides direction to prevent adverse reactions to vaccines.

Recommendations From NVAC: Standards for Adult Immunization Practice*

References:
Recommendations From NVAC: Standards for Adult Immunization Practice*

Steps That May Help Increase Vaccination Rates Among Adults

1 **Step 1: Assess**
   - Stay informed. Get the latest Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations for immunization of adults
   - Review how well your practice keeps patients up to date on vaccines
   - Implement systems—e.g., electronic medical records (EMR) flag/notification—to identify patients for needed vaccines based on age, risk factor indications for vaccination, and prior vaccination history
   - Patients’ vaccination needs may change over time based on factors such as age, health conditions, lifestyle, travel, and occupation
   - Many patients are not aware of the vaccinations they may need
   - Give your patients a vaccine questionnaire to complete at check-in
   - Implementing protocols and policies can help ensure that patients’ vaccine needs are routinely reviewed and patients get reminders about vaccines they need

2 **Step 2: Recommend (S.H.A.R.E.)**
   - Share the reasons why the recommended vaccine is right for the patient
   - Highlight your own experiences with vaccines to reinforce the benefits
   - Address patient questions and any concerns about the vaccine
   - Remind patients that many of the diseases that adult vaccines can help prevent are common in the United States and can be serious
   - Explain the potential costs of getting the disease, including serious health effects, time lost, and financial costs

3 **Step 3: Administer**
   - Recommend and offer vaccines at the same visit
   - If you don’t vaccinate, refer patients to a healthcare professional who does
   - Train your authorized staff on vaccine administration
   - Use standing orders or protocols for vaccine administration. Authorize nurses, pharmacists, and other healthcare professionals to assess patient vaccine status and, where permitted, administer needed vaccinations
   - Properly store and handle vaccines
   - Distribute Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) to patients
   - Ensure proper care for patients to minimize potential risks to your patients
   - Follow standard precautions to control infection
   - Be aware of and prepared for potential adverse reactions

4 **Step 4: Document**
   - Keep an up-to-date record of the vaccines your patients have received
   - Record vaccination in patients’ health records
   - Provide documentation of vaccines to patients for their personal records
   - Document vaccinations in immunization information systems (confidential, community-wide, computerized databases that record vaccines administered by participating healthcare professionals)

*This list is intended to help you think through the process your office can use in setting up a vaccination protocol. It is not a complete representation of all the steps you may need to take in your practice prior to vaccinating patients. Please consult appropriate additional sources to ensure that the needs of your individual practice are met. This list is not intended for use in establishing a mass-vaccination program.