

Public Health

Seattle & King County

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VFC Universal Purchase Update

Washington State's budget for 2009-2011 passed the legislature and has gone to the Governor for signature. In this budget, funding for the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine will no longer be included in the State's universal vaccine purchase program beginning July 1, 2009. All other vaccines in the Vaccines For Children (VFC) program will be available for all children until May 1, 2010, or until currently allocated funds are exhausted, at which point State funding for the universal vaccine purchase program will be discontinued.

The federal VFC program will continue to fund childhood vaccines for approximately 70% of children in Washington State who meet VFC criteria: Medicaid-enrolled, uninsured, underinsured (they have insurance that does not cover immunizations), or American Indian or Alaska Native. For details about what these changes mean to you as a vaccine provider, see VFC News on page 2.

New Resources for Answers to Parents' Questions About Vaccines

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has a new resource for parents who have questions about vaccines. A series of audio interviews with pediatricians, infectious disease experts and others are posted at www.cispimmunize.org/fam/soundadvice.html. Parents can hear answers to questions such as: Do vaccines contain toxins? Is it better to let your child get chickenpox naturally? What is "herd immunity?" Is the HPV vaccine safe? Do vaccines cause autism? What does the recent decision in vaccine court mean for parents? Why should

infants get the Hepatitis B vaccine? Can too many vaccines overwhelm a child's immune system?

The AAP has additional resources about immunization for parents and journalists:

- Vaccine Studies: Examine the Evidence www.cispimmunize.org/Vaccine%20Studies.pdf
- Facts for Parents About Vaccine Safety www.cispimmunize.org/fam/facts/VaccineSafety_English.doc
- The Vaccine Schedule: Why is it Like That? www.cispimmunize.org/pro/pdf/Vaccineschedule.pdf
- Questions and Answers About Vaccine Ingredients www.cispimmunize.org/pro/pdf/Vaccineingredients.pdf
- Vaccines: What Every Parent Should Know www.aap.org/pressroom/aappr-features.htm
- "Get the Picture: Childhood Immunizations," a short video to help answer parents' questions about childhood immunizations www.cdc.gov/CDCTV/GetThePicture/index.html

H1N1 Influenza A (Swine Flu) Update

Public Health - Seattle & King County continues to update information about H1N1 influenza as the outbreak progresses, including revised guidelines for reporting, testing, and treatment. You can find the current recommendations from Public Health at www.kingcounty.gov/health/H1N1 and on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/.

Updated recommendations are also sent to providers via e-mailed Health Alerts. If you are not already receiving Health Alerts, you can sign up by sending an e-mail to Maybelle.Tamura@kingcounty.gov.

Please continue to advise persons with influenza-like illness (fever of 100° F or more, with either cough or sore throat) to stay home from work or school or other activities for 7 days from symptom onset, or 24 hours after their symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.

New Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) for Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine

An updated VIS for PPV (pneumococcal polysaccharide 23-valent vaccine) dated April 16, 2009, is now available on the CDC Web site: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-ppv.pdf. The updated VIS incorporates recent changes in ACIP recommendations regarding indications, mainly for smokers and people with asthma.

SAVE THE DATE: CDC Adult Immunization Update August 6, 2009

CDC will present an "Adult Immunization Update" as a live webcast on July 31. After July 31, the session will be available as an archived webcast. Public Health has set up a group viewing of the archived webcast on August 6, from 9 a.m. to noon in conference room 121 in the Chinook Building at 401 5th Avenue, Seattle. Information about viewing the live webcast on your own on July 31 and registration information for the archived webcast will be available in late June.



VFC Universal Purchase Update

The Washington State Legislature recently passed a budget that directs the state to discontinue state-funded purchase of HPV vaccine beginning July 1, 2009.

How does this change impact me? Providers will need to purchase HPV vaccine from Merck (the vaccine maker) or a vaccine distributor in order to continue immunizing insured children seen in their practice as of July 1st. Providers can bill the patient's insurance company for the cost of the HPV vaccine. Children who are Medicaid-enrolled, uninsured, underinsured, or American Indian/Alaska Native can continue to receive VFC-supplied HPV vaccine after July 1st. Adolescents presenting at a family planning or school clinic as unaccompanied minors who do not know their insurance information can be considered VFC-eligible, and receive a dose of HPV vaccine from the VFC Program supply. Health care providers do not have to verify VFC eligibility; it is based on parent (or patient) report.

What do I do with the HPV vaccine that I have on hand? As of July 1st, regardless of when the vaccine was acquired, VFC-provided HPV vaccine can be given only to uninsured, under-insured, Medicaid-enrolled or Native American/Alaska Native children. Adolescent girls with insurance that will pay for the vaccine will **not** be eligible for HPV vaccine from the VFC Program as of July 1st, including doses acquired before July 1st. However, up until that deadline, continue giving HPV vaccine to all adolescent girls.

VFC Status Screening surveys due May 15th!

As of April 1, 2009, providers should have begun screening every child at every immunization visit for VFC eligibility (also known as "Status Screening"). A survey asking which method your clinic uses to track children's insurance status was mailed at the end of April. Please be sure to complete the survey and return it in the postage-paid envelope that was provided. Include a printout or photocopy of the form you use to document VFC eligibility status. **Surveys and examples were due by May 15, 2009.** See Broadcast Fax #2 (April 1, 2009) for more details on status screening or call to request an informational packet.

- Please make a point of identifying your clinic on the survey.
- The example provided must indicate clearly where and how the patient's status is recorded.
- We will follow-up with providers who do not respond, who do not include examples and/or do not identify themselves on the survey (by process of elimination).
- Once a year, VFC participants will be asked to produce a report called the Practice Composition Survey, listing the total number of children in their practice in each of the status categories (insured, uninsured, under-insured, Medicaid-enrolled, Native American/Alaska Native).

Did you know...

...about HPV vaccine minimum intervals?

- Take advantage of HPV minimum intervals to give HPV vaccine to your girls in your practice who are aged 11 through 18 years before July 1, when the vaccine will be covered only for VFC-eligible girls.
- Minimum intervals from dose 1 to dose 2 = 4 weeks, dose 2 to dose 3 = 12 weeks, and dose 1 to dose 3 = 24 weeks.

Study Shows Combination Vaccine Is Safe and Effective for Infants

A recent study led by Dr. Fernando Guerra of the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District compared the effectiveness of the combined diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, and *Haemophilus influenzae* type B vaccine (Pentacel) and separate vaccines in approximately 2,000 infants and followed them until five years of age.

Published in the January issue of Pediatrics, researchers found that there were similar or fewer injection site and systemic reactions and similar or higher antibody levels associated with the DTaP-IPV-Hib vaccine. The results were comparable with regard to antibody levels when the children reached age five. The study is available online at <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/123/1/301>.

Printing the CIS form with a Td/Tdap primary series

On the new Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS) form that can be printed from CHILD Profile, there are only two spaces for tetanus-containing vaccines given at or after age 7 years. If a child received a primary (3 dose) series of tetanus-containing vaccines at or after age 7 years, only the first two show up on the new CIS, because there are only two spaces on the form.

For now, you will need to write in the dates of any doses given beyond #2. Changes to this form will be made with the next CHILD Profile revision, and as budget permits. Please direct questions to CHILD Profile Help Desk 1-800-325-5599.

Find Useful Immunization Information on the Immunization Action Coalition Website

The Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) continues to redesign its website for healthcare professionals at www.immunize.org. The changes to the home page and to the "Ask the Experts" and "Print Materials" sections are geared to make it easy for visitors to stay informed of updates to their website and to stay apprised of the news and activities in the world of immunization. You can easily find the links to redesigned sections by clicking on the box titled "What's New at IAC" at the center of the home page at www.immunize.org.