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Influenza Vaccine Ordering Begins

The dust is just beginning to settle from the 2009-10 Flu Season, but it's already time to order vaccines for the 2010-11 Influenza Season. Most providers have received a letter from the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) with guidelines on ordering influenza (flu) vaccine for State Health Centers, County-Municipal Health Departments, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Rural Health Clinics, Private VFC Providers and other Department approved Public Provider sites.

When placing your vaccine order, keep in mind that The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have opted to include the H1N1 Novel strain in the regular seasonal flu vaccine, so there will only be one flu vaccine to order and administer.

To place a flu order, PA VFC Providers must indicate the number of anticipated doses on the *Influenza Vaccine Order Form*. The *Influenza Vaccine Ordering Form* was included in a June Packet mailed to all providers, and is located at <http://www.health.state.pa.us/vfc>, the first link under Vaccines for Children Links.

If you did not receive your *Influenza Vaccine Order Form* and do not have access to the Department's website, contact the PA VFC Program at our toll free line 1-888-646-6864 to request a flu order form. Flu orders must be received by **August 13, 2010**. Completed order forms for influenza vaccine may be emailed to pimmunizations@state.pa.us or faxed to (717) 214-7223.

Influenza vaccine obtained through the Department may only be provided to persons six months of age and older who have no access to vaccine from other sources and, due to age or underlying medical conditions, are at risk for complications of influenza. Distribution of the influenza vaccine will most likely begin in October, dependant upon when vaccine arrives at the contracted distributor, McKesson.

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16th PA Immunization Conference

The 16th Annual Pennsylvania Immunization Conference (PIC) was held Thursday, June 24, 2010, at the Lancaster Marriott Hotel in Lancaster, PA. This year's conference had a record number of approximately 315 attendees.

The conference was organized by the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH), Division of Immunizations, and the Pennsylvania Immunization Coalition (PAIC). The conference brings immunization partners together to share information and discuss current issues for the purpose of improving immunization rates in Pennsylvania.

PA-SIIS Wants You

Your practice, as a partner in the Pennsylvania Vaccines for Children (PA VFC) Program, is critical in helping us achieve public health goals to reduce vaccine preventable diseases. The Pennsylvania Department of Health is committed to its mission of improving the health of all residents through participation in our population-based immunization tracking system known as the Pennsylvania Statewide Immunization Information System (PA-SIIS). PA-SIIS provides physician practices with an effective, no-cost tool to help achieve complete and timely immunizations for all, particularly children most at risk (birth through age two).

PA-SIIS works by capturing and storing immunization information from healthcare providers in one central location. If a patient receives immunizations from more than one healthcare provider, PA-SIIS consolidates the immunization information from all providers to create one complete, current record for each patient. This aids in the creation of timely immunization reports (e.g., HEDIS, coverage rates, usage). Providers who participate in PA-SIIS do not have to complete the dose administered by year of age section on the vaccine order form or complete Letter 'D' on the Provider Site Profile/Enrollment Form.

There is **NO COST** to participate in the PA-SIIS. Initial training, refresher training and ongoing technical and statistical staff support are all provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Please visit the PA-SIIS Web site at www.health.state.pa.us/pasiis to find out how you can become a participating provider and about other potential benefits for your practice. If you prefer to speak to someone directly, please call (877)774-4748. We look forward to your support and participation in the PA-SIIS.

Providers participating in the PA VFC are strongly encouraged to join PA-SIIS.

Immunizations Across The Lifespan (Who Knew) Media Campaign

The Division of Immunizations with the support of Pennsylvania's Secretary of Health Everette James is conducting a targeted statewide public health campaign to encourage immunizations across the lifespan (IAL). The Immunization Across the Lifespan campaign theme "Who Knew" is expected to facilitate the expansion of public awareness about the need to stay current with immunization education. IAL will educate and inform Pennsylvanians about the importance of receiving "the right vaccines at the right age and at the right time." Immunization education is intended to complement personal education and advice one would receive from their primary healthcare provider in a medical home. Informed patients, working together with their primary healthcare providers, are the key players in keeping themselves and their children healthy, as well as, protecting the health of the public. IAL activities include radio, billboard and posters to promote immunizations. To view immunization information the following link is provided www.VaccinesForLife.com

Vaccine Tracking System (VTrckS)

The Vaccine Tracking System (VTrckS) is a web-based system that will integrate the entire PA VFC vaccine supply chain from purchasing and ordering to distribution of the vaccine. This national provision will allow PA providers to input their vaccine requests (orders) directly online, thereby improving efficiency and accountability of public dollars. The system will evaluate vaccine orders against specific guidelines set by PA VFC Program and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

VTrckS is being developed by teams with a variety of expertise and in consultation with key stakeholders, including grantees and immunization providers. A Grantee Advisory Committee is helping to ensure that VTrckS will meet the needs of the grantee community, and a Provider Advisory Committee is working to ensure that VTrckS will meet the needs of the health care provider community. PA VFC will be launching VTrckS in the spring of 2011. Stay tuned for more details.

4 Most Common PA VFC Form Issues

There are four common PA VFC form submission problems that the PA VFC program sees most often. Avoiding the most common problems ahead of time will increase your turn-around-time for receiving vaccine orders. Quite often, when the PA VFC customer service toll free line rings, a provider calls to inquire the status of their vaccine order. Delays in receipt of vaccine orders are because of one of the following four reasons:

- Missing provider identification number (PIN) - the PIN must be on all PA VFC correspondence
- Outdated vaccine ordering form - the current form accepted is Vaccine Order Form (HD1146F April 2010).
- Missing temperature logs - temperature logs are due the 5th of each month.
- Incomplete vaccine order form submitted.

To insure a smooth and quick processing of the PA VFC form, review your form prior to submission; for questions or assistance, call toll free 888-646-6864.

National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM)

The Pennsylvania Department of Health would like to promote and support the August observation of National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM). We encourage coalitions, County and Municipal Health Departments and District Offices to initiate and participate in the NIAM events throughout the state. NIAM is a great way to rally local organizations in your immunization education efforts. Communities are encouraged to plan local health screenings or fairs, media events and other related immunization outreach efforts during the month of August to promote the benefits of immunization.

August is the perfect time to remind family, friends, co-workers and those in the community to catch up on their vaccinations. Parents are enrolling their children in school, students are entering college and healthcare workers are preparing for the upcoming flu season. The goal of NIAM is to increase awareness about immunizations across the life span, from infants to the elderly.

Pprevnar 13 Vaccine Administration Fee

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently added the new 13-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13) to its list of recommended vaccines. PCV13 (Pprevnar 13) has replaced the PCV7 (Pprevnar) vaccine. Because the PA Department of Health provides vaccines free of charge to providers enrolled in the PA Vaccines for Children Program (PA VFC) for VFC-eligible recipients, Medicaid does not reimburse for the actual vaccine and the PA VFC program only reimburses for a vaccine administration fee. Providers may use the unspecified vaccine administration procedure code 90749 until such time as a Medical Assistance Bulletin is released pertaining to this subject matter (targeted for August 1, 2010).

Vaccine Storage

1. Proper Temperatures

Freeze
MMR,
MMRV, and
Varicella

Aim for 0° F

5° F
or below
(-15° C or below)

Don't let temps
get too warm!

Refrigerate
all other
vaccines

Aim for 40° F

Don't freeze
liquid vaccines!

35° F - 48° F
(2° C - 8° C)

Don't let temps
get too warm!

2. Proper Set Up

Stand-alone freezer

- ✓ Place thermometers in the center of both the refrigerator and freezer. Post a temperature log on each door.
- ✓ Group vaccines by type. Clearly label the designated space for each vaccine.
- ✓ Keep vaccine spaced 2-3 inches away from walls and other boxes.
- ✓ Post "Do Not Unplug" warning signs on electrical outlets and circuit breakers. Plug in only one unit per outlet.

Refrigerator-only unit

Stand-alone freezer instructions:

- ✗ No food in freezer!
- ✗ No vaccine in doors! Fill space with cold packs.
- Fill space with cold packs.

Refrigerator-only unit instructions:

- ✗ No vaccine in doors! Fill space with water bottles.
- ✗ No food in refrigerator!
- ✗ No vaccine in drawers or on floor of refrigerator! Fill space with water bottles.

Warnings: WARNING! Do Not Unplug

Monitor Temperatures!

- Use only certified thermometers in accordance with National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). If your thermometer uses batteries, replace them every 6 months.
- Check and record refrigerator and freezer temperatures twice a day, in the morning and at the close of business. PA VFC temperature logs must be kept for a period of 3 years. If the temperature is out of range, consult Section 5-10 of the PA VFC Handbook "Handling Vaccine Exposed to Out-of-Range Temperatures."
- Make sure that the door is shut.

Maintain and Rotate Stock

- Rotate vaccine stock by placing shorter expiration dates in front. Call PA VFC if you have any vaccine that will expire within 3 months.
- Keep PA VFC vaccines in original packaging until it is time to use them.
- Keep PA VFC vaccines separate from privately purchased vaccines.
- Have an emergency plan for extended power outages and freezer or refrigerator malfunctions.
- Designate one fully trained staff member to be the primary vaccine coordinator and at least one person to be back-up to ensure ongoing training.

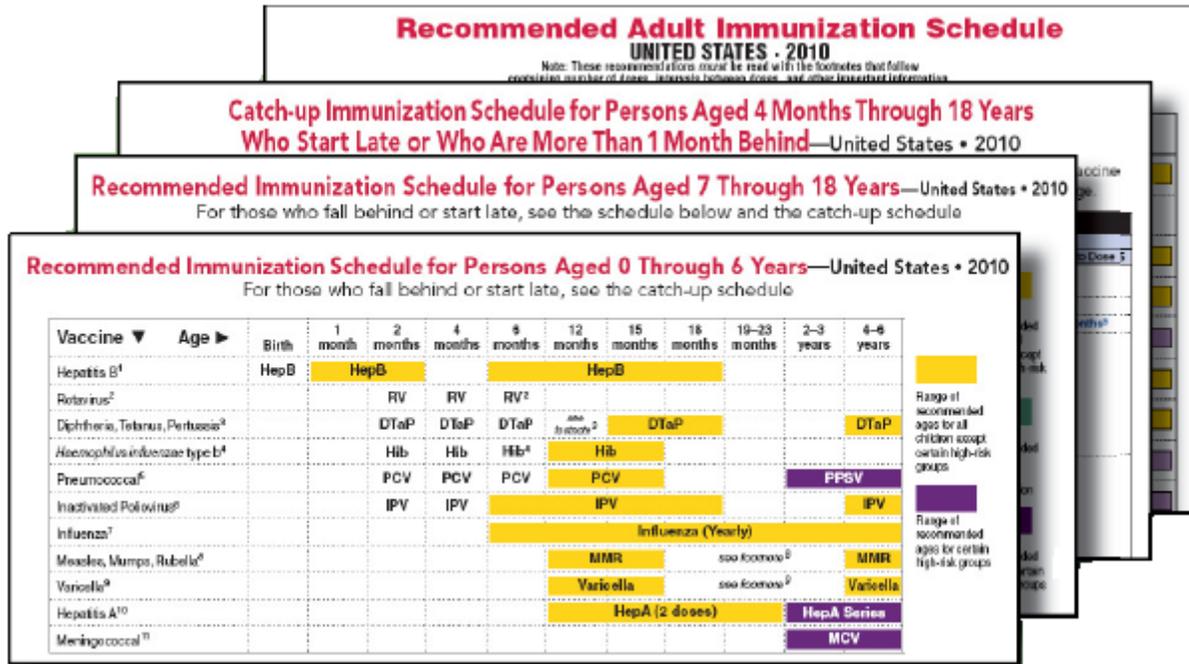
Image adapted from California VFC Program (EZ-IZ) online

CDC Recommended Immunization Schedules for 2010

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) annually publishes an immunization schedule for persons birth through 18 years of age that summarizes recommendations for currently licensed vaccines for children aged 18 years and younger and includes recommendations in effect as of December 15, 2009.

Recommended 2010 immunization schedules are available at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/acip-list.htm>



Contraindication for Administration of Rotavirus Vaccine

Rotavirus vaccine (RV5 or RV1) is contraindicated in infants diagnosed with severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID). In response to reported cases of rotavirus vaccine infection in infants with severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID) following rotavirus vaccine administration, both Merck & Co. and GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals have revised the package inserts for their respective rotavirus vaccine products, pentavalent rotavirus vaccine (RV5) and monovalent rotavirus vaccine (RV1), with approval from the Food and Drug Administration. Based on available data, CDC recommends an update to the list of contraindications for both rotavirus vaccines, RV5 and RV1. Consultation with an immunologist or infectious disease specialist is advised for infants with known or suspected altered immunocompetence before rotavirus vaccine is administered. To reference the complete article access the link below:

http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5922a3.htm?s_cid=mm5922a3_e

Economic Order Quantity EOQ Initiative

The PA VFC Program was selected by the CDC as one of four state programs to implement the EOQ Initiative in 2009. The goal of EOQ is to implement industry best practices to improve management of publicly funded vaccines, thereby lowering operational and vaccine costs. The EOQ Initiative makes use of data from PA VFC provider ordering patterns to determine the most efficient ordering frequency for each provider. During March 2009, the PA VFC Program distributed EOQ ordering calendars and educated all PA VFC providers relative to the EOQ Pilot Program. During Fall 2009, the Top 10 ordering providers received additional EOQ education in the form of face-to-face meetings. December 2009 marked the beginning of approximately 20 states, including Pennsylvania, to formally implement EOQ nationwide in 2010. Educational intervention is underway to identify training needs and to further educate providers concerning EOQ. During April 2010, PA VFC Providers received their 2010 ordering tiers based upon the CDC's recommendations.

Ordering Guidelines of EOQ

The EOQ guidelines place providers in four categories based on their annual volume of doses ordered and storage capacity to determine the frequency with which a provider should order vaccine.

Ordering Volume	Doses per year	Ordering Frequency	Ordering X's per year
High Volume	6000 doses/year	Monthly	12 times a year
Medium Volume	800-5999 doses/year	Bi-monthly	6 times a year
Low Volume	200-799 doses/year	Quarterly	4 times a year
Very Low Volume	0-199 doses/year	As is	As Needed

The ultimate goal of the PA VFC program is to support provider efforts to vaccinate as many children as possible. Questions regarding EOQ may be addressed to the PA VFC Program's toll-free number 888-646-6864 or 717-787-5681.

Approval of New School Regulations

Amendments to the Department of Health's regulations for school immunizations have been approved and will become effective on August 1, 2011, for the 2011/2012 school year. The new regulations will not be implemented until 2011 so parents, providers and schools can prepare and make sure all children have the new recommended vaccines. The amendments require that children in all grades receive an additional dose of mumps vaccine and of varicella vaccine beginning school year 2011 - 2012 and that students in seventh grade, beginning in the 2011- 2012 school year, have one dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) and one dose of tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis vaccine (Tdap). The amendments also clarify which immunization requirements apply to children under the age of five years who attend child care group settings located in a school. Furthermore, these amendments allow for a four day grace period for vaccines given prior too recommendations for age or minimum interval between doses. The Department developed these amendments based upon the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). For the entire publication of the amendments to the regulations, visit the Department of Health's website at:

<http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/>

Helpful Links

Chart of Vaccines in Delay or Shortage

Updated information may be found at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/shortages/default.htm>

Ask the Experts

Experts from the CDC answer challenging and timely questions about vaccines and their administration.

<http://www.immunize.org/askexperts/>

Reference link to the CDC Storage and Handling Toolkit

This toolkit provides general guidelines for correct vaccine storage and handling. The toolkit does not replace the state health department policies, but rather is meant to supplement them.

<http://www2a.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/sh toolkit/>

For details regarding recommended vaccine storage and handling procedures in Pennsylvania.

PA VFC Toll Free Line: 888-646-6864

PA Division of Immunizations Program: 717-787-5681

Fax Lines: 717-214-7223 (Temperature logs) 717-441-3800 (Orders)

Email questions: paimmunizations@state.pa.us

Continuing Education Opportunities

Listings and links for CMEs, CNEs, CEUs, <http://www.immunize.org/resources/contedu.asp>

PA VFC Contact Information



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Rose Cox - Enrollment
Cindy Findley, M.S.W. - Program Manager
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