



Whatcom County Health Department
Immunization Program
1500 N State Street, Bellingham, WA 98225
676-4593

NEEDLE POINTS

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Whatcom County Immunization Awards

In November of 2010 Whatcom county VFC providers and WCHD shared an evening to celebrate the achievements of three Whatcom County providers that were instrumental during 2009 to assure all children are fully immunized against vaccine preventable diseases. Award recipients were **Foster Family Medicine** (a small practice) for an exceptionally high immunization rate of **100%**, and **Dickson Medical Clinic** (a medium size practice) for an exceptionally high immunization coverage rate of **94%** for children 24 to 35 months of age. The final award went to Western Washington University Student Health Center for immunizing incoming students, meeting all site requirements and taking advantage of all immunization training and continuing education.

Thank you award recipients and all VFC providers for your outstanding work in an increasingly complex field!

Changes at Whatcom County Health Department

Beginning January 1, 2011 the WCHD is **no longer offering any adult vaccinations**. Clients seeking routine adult vaccines will be referred to their primary care physician, Custom RX Shoppe Pharmacy, Hoagland Pharmacy, Infusion Solutions or SeaMar Community Health Center in Bellingham.

*An option for providers who have low-income adults without health insurance is the GSK Vaccine Access program. This program is open to adults ages 19 and up whose income totals no more than \$27,075 for a single person or \$36,425 for a couple (250% of the federal poverty level). The free vaccines include Hep A and B, Tdap, and HPV (Cervarix). Go to www.GSK-VAP.com for more information.

NOTE: WCHD will continue to offer routine children's vaccines for children, up to the 19th birthday, without insurance, a provider, or who have a large deductible making vaccine unaffordable. Vaccines will be offered by appointment on the *second and fourth Wednesdays* of every month.

VFC Childhood Vaccine Program Updates

2010 was a very busy and challenging year for the WCHD immunization program and the VFC providers. Thank you for all your hard work in implementing the transition from universal vaccine coverage to universal vaccine purchase coverage and submitting your dosage based assessments for your privately insured children. Most of your practices also participated in the ARRA immunization records clean-up project in the CHILD Profile registry. We had some dramatic successes which we hope to share in the near future.

The economic situation and resulting state and federal budget cuts have increased the focus on vaccine accountability and improving performance this year. The federal Vaccines for Children (VFC) vaccine purchasing budget is now about **\$4 billion** dollars per year. At the local level, we need to make sure Congress knows that we are good stewards of this vaccine and assure it is protected, viable and given according to recommendations.

These are recent and upcoming changes:

- **Economic Order Quantity (EOQ):** Beginning this month (January), EOQ officially began, which is designed to decrease the cost of vaccine order processing and distribution by increasing efficiency. All providers should have received a packet outlining your order frequency and an e-mail attachment with the *Recommended Order Quantity Calculator*. This tool calculates the quantity of vaccine needed, specific to each practice, for each ordering cycle. *Its use is recommended by all providers.*
 - **NOTE:** Provider orders placed outside the recommended order quantity will not be approved and will be returned for resubmission.
 - **EOQ Web Page:** www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/immunize/vaccine/eoq.htm (*hint, calculator is here as well*)
- **Department of Health Mailing, mid-January:** A DOH mailing will include the new and recently updated training DVD, "Immunization Techniques: Best Practices with Infants, Children, and Adult." This 25-minute DVD can be used to train new employees as part of their orientation and to refresh the skills of experienced staff. Please look for this packet and take time to view this excellent DVD and to share with other staff.
- **Provider Compliance Site Visits will Increase in 2011:** The health department is now required to visit 40% of the enrolled VFC provider every year. For the larger practices this will occur annually, for others, every two years.
- **New Certified/Calibrated Thermometers and Pink Books:** WCHD has purchased new thermometers and Pink Books for each practice. As your immunization nurse consultant visits your practice, you will receive the appropriate number for your site. These new thermometers have both an alarm and display the minimum and maximum temperatures.
- **Coming Soon - Online Vaccine Ordering:** All providers will complete their vaccine order online and be able to track their order status using the CHILD Profile registry. Stay tuned.
- **VFC Status Screening:** Tracking VFC eligibility is a CDC requirement unconnected to Washington's universal vaccine purchase coverage program. Providers can be suspended from the VFC Program for failing to document this information.
 - Once a year your practice must submit a "Provider Practice Profile" summary which includes showing the numbers of children who are 1) Medicaid-enrolled, 2) Uninsured, 3) Under-insured (a private plan that does not cover all or some vaccines), 4) Native American/Alaska Native, and 5) Privately insured. The reportable age groups are "under 1 year," "1 - 6 years," and "7 - 18 years."

One of the easiest ways to track and report this information is by using the "VFC Status" field on each patient's demographic page of the CHILD Profile Immunization Registry. This function can also print out the annual Practice Profile Summary. In order for this to work, staff must update the field 100% of the time at each visit.

- **Use of Tdap Vaccine (Boostrix & Adacel):** The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP) met recently to discuss use of Tdap vaccine. New recommendations were made in the VFC program resolution document. Once published in the MMWR, the recommendation will be official. Until then, catch-up use of Tdap for children less than 10 years of age (Boostrix) or 11 years of age (Adacel) is considered "off-label" use. In the event a provider makes a clinical decision to use Tdap vaccine "off-label," to vaccinate a 7 - 9 year old, state-supplied vaccine may be used. The liability for off-label use of any vaccine is the responsibility of the provider using their clinical judgment to make the decision.
 - **Immunization Guidelines for the Use of State Supplied Vaccine**, which outlines allowed usage of state supplied vaccine, was updated 12/6/10. *Please review Tdap catch-up language and replace older version.* Go to: www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/immunize/documents/vacusage.pdf

Did You Know About Viral Hepatitis and Liver Cancer?

Viral hepatitis is the cause of most (78%) primary liver cancer and the third leading cause of cancer deaths in the world. It is the most common cause, after alcohol, of chronic liver disease. Hepatitis C virus is the most frequent reason for a liver transplant in the United States. Prevention of Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C virus transmission and treatment for early disease can prevent primary liver cancer.

- Over 1 million persons in the United States are living with chronic Hepatitis B infection; an estimated 38,000 are newly infected each year, while approximately 3000 die annually of the disease.
- Half of all chronic Hepatitis B infections in the U.S. are among Asian Pacific Islanders.
- In Washington State, only half of the estimated 550 to 750 hepatitis B positive pregnant women are reported to the Department of Health.
 - In 2008, of the 372 women reported to DOH, 71% of the infants born to these mothers received the recommended HBIG and 3 doses of hepatitis B vaccine by 6 - 8 months of age.
 - 85% received the HBIG and 3 doses of hepatitis B vaccine by 12 months of age.
 - There are about 2 to 6 cases of perinatal hepatitis B virus infections in Washington State per year.
 - *Whatcom County had 4 perinatal hepatitis B cases in 2010!*
- Over 3.9 million persons in the United States are living with chronic Hepatitis C infection; an estimated 18,000 are newly infected each year, while approximately 12,000 die annually of the disease.
- In Washington State, an estimated 100,000 people may be infected with hepatitis C virus. Fewer than 30 acute cases are reported and around 5,700 chronic cases are reported annually.
- There is no vaccine to prevent hepatitis C infection.

The good news is that there are fewer cases of hepatitis B and hepatitis C each year as vaccination and awareness prevention increase. A large number of infants born to hepatitis B positive women who are reported to DOH get the right treatment at birth. Prevention in infants with recommended HBIG and hepatitis B vaccine is highly effective, therefore, please remember to screen all pregnant women.

Vaccine Success Story - Rubella

For most children and adults, rubella is a mild febrile rash illness of short duration; however, if acquired during pregnancy it can result in birth defects, miscarriage or fetal death. A syndrome referred to as congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) may include eye defects, hearing problems, cardiac defects, neurologic abnormalities and developmental delay. The affects are most profound if acquired during the first 16 weeks of gestation.

Before a vaccine was available, a rubella outbreak in the U.S. (1969) led to 57,686 people developing the disease. Because many of those infected were pregnant women, many fetuses died and many infants were born with permanent disabilities. The number of rubella cases fell very sharply once the rubella vaccine was licensed in 1969. Today there are an average of 5 to 6 congenital rubella syndrome cases reported annually.

Progress has also been made globally with two-thirds of all countries using rubella vaccine in their national vaccination programs. As of December 2009, 130 World Health Organization (WHO) member states have introduced rubella-containing vaccine, a 57% increase since 1996. During 2009, 121,344 rubella cases were reported to WHO, an 82% decrease from the 670,894 cases reported to WHO in 2000.

Ask the Immunization Nurse

What vaccines are safe to give to a breastfeeding mother?

All routine vaccines, including live virus vaccines, are safe for breastfeeding mothers. The only vaccine that should not be given to breastfeeding mothers is smallpox vaccine.

Should I aspirate before vaccinating?

No. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP) does not recommend aspirating when administering vaccines. No data exists to justify this practice. Injections given at recommended sites are not given where large vessels are present. Given the needle size and angle of injection, it would be very difficult to inject intravenously. If one does aspirate and gets blood return, you must waste a very expensive vaccine.

When vaccinating, should I wear gloves?

No. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations do not require healthcare workers wear gloves when administering vaccines, unless they are likely to come in contact with body fluids or have open lesions on their hands. If a HCW does wear gloves, they must change them between each patient.

How do I know the exact expiration date for vaccine written as month/year?

Vaccine with expiration dates written as month/year expire on the last day of that month. For example, if the date says EXP 5/11, the expiration date would be 5/31/11. Please monitor your vaccine supply carefully so that vaccines do not expire.

Education and Training Opportunities

"P.J. Gets Wise", Free Adolescent Immunization DVD

This 10-minute video showcases a pre-teen girl who investigates serious diseases and the vaccines that prevent them. This would be a nice resource for waiting rooms or exam rooms. To view a trailer or to access an order form go to: www.mchc.net (Link is in the right column under "MCHC Merchandise".)

Personalized Immunization Schedule for Parents Available Online

This program will generate the recommended immunization schedule for children under 6 years of age based on the child's birthdate. Parents can even choose to receive reminders of when their child is due for the next immunization! Go to: www.vaccinateyourbaby.org/schedule

New from the Immunization Action Coalition (IAC)

- A new handout, "Vaccines with Diluents: How to Use Them" contains information about each product and how much time each vaccine is viable after reconstitution. www.immunize.org/catg.d/p3040.pdf
- IAC's package inserts and manufacturers make it easy to find package insert information from all US manufacturers. Go to: www.immunize.org/packageinserts

One Needle, One Syringe, Only One Time Campaign:

The *One & Only Campaign* is a public health campaign, led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the [Safe Injection Practices Coalition](http://www.safeinjectionpracticescoalition.org) (SIPC), to raise awareness among patients and healthcare providers about safe injection practices. The campaign aims to eradicate outbreaks resulting from unsafe injection practices. To view the video go to: www.oneandonlycampaign.org/

Updated Vaccine Information Sheets (VIS's)

Please replace existing VIS's and update these VIS dates in your EMR.

- **Rotavirus Vaccine (RV) VIS (12/6/2010)**
This new edition refers to a potential adverse event (intussusception risk with Rotarix) not mentioned in the previous edition. Begin using this edition immediately.
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/rotavirus/Vac-label-hcp.htm

Resources Enclosed - Please Update in Your WCHD Immunization Binder!

- VIS: RV
- Emergency Response Worksheet 3d
- It's federal law! 6a
- Immunization Guidelines For the Use of State Supplied Vaccine 7c
- Summary of Recommendations for Child/Teen Immunizations 7d
- Summary of Recommendations for Adult Immunization 9b
- Pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV) CDC answers your questions 9c
- If you have HIV infection, which vaccinations do you need? 9fiii
- If you have hepatitis C, which vaccinations do you need? 9fiv
- Screening Questionnaire for Child and Teen Immunization 10e
- Screening Questionnaire for Adult Immunization 10f
- Vaccines with Diluents: How to Use Them 10ii
- Giving All the Doses 11 - 12 Year of Age 10mi
- Evidence Shows Vaccines Unrelated to Autism 14d
- Reliable Sources of Immunization Information for Health Professionals by WCHD 16a
- Reliable Sources of Immunization Information for the Community by WCHD 16b
- Example of "Personalized Immunization Schedule" available online