



Whatcom County Health Department
Immunization Program
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NEEDLE POINTS

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Changes to Universal Vaccine Purchasing

Washington's childhood vaccine program is changing. The childhood vaccine program is transitioning from a universal system where the state supplied all vaccines for children to a system where vaccine for privately insured children must be purchased by providers.

- **Starting July 1, 2009**, children with private health insurance will no longer be eligible for state-supplied HPV vaccine.
- **Starting May 1, 2010**, children with private health insurance will no longer be eligible for any state-supplied vaccine.

What this means for provider practices is that children privately insured for vaccinations will no longer receive state-supplied vaccine, first for HPV, then for all vaccines according to the above dates.

Please Note! The Vaccines for Children Program (VFC) continues regardless of changes in state funded vaccine purchasing. The federal portion of the childhood vaccine program remains intact. Continue to order your state-supplied HPV vaccine at no charge through DOH for:

- **VFC eligible children 18 and under:**
 - Medicaid eligible
 - American Indian/Alaska Native
 - Uninsured
 - Underinsured for vaccine (have health insurance but it does not cover vaccines or has a limit on vaccine coverage)
- **Children in state sponsored health plans (DSHS):**
 - State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)
 - Children's Health Program (CHP)
 - Apple Health
 - Health Care Authority - Basic Health Plan (BHP)

Health care providers are not required to verify any information a parent reports about VFC eligibility. The program requires that a provider asks VFC eligibility, records the information and if eligible, gives state-supplied vaccine.

Why is VFC Status Screening Important?

This allows the clinician administering the vaccine to identify children who qualify for state-supplied HPV vaccine and those who qualify for privately purchased HPV vaccine. VFC status screening establishes the practice profile that helps determine the amount of private vaccine to purchase and the amount of state-supplied vaccine to order.

Ordering State-Supplied HPV Vaccine

VFC eligible children represent about 55% of the children in Washington. This percentage may be more or less for your practice. An **ordering allocation** for HPV vaccine was set up by DOH for each practice based on last years practice profile and county Medicaid enrollment data. DOH will mail this allocation amount directly to your clinic.

If you think you have more VFC eligible children in your practice, and have data that supports a higher number, notify the Department of Health. DOH will work with you to adjust your allocation.

Please do not over order HPV vaccine! Even if a privately insured adolescent started on state-supplied vaccine, they cannot be given state-supplied HPV vaccine as of July 1st, 2009!

Purchasing Private HPV Vaccine

There are a number of options for purchasing vaccine. Take some time in making this decision because it can make a difference in how much your clinic pays for vaccines. Enclosed is a resource from the American Academy of Pediatrics about purchasing vaccines. These are three models:

- Ordering vaccine directly from the manufacturer
- Ordering vaccine from a distributor
- Ordering from a Group Purchasing Organization (GPO) (can negotiate lower prices because of bulk purchase)

For more information, visit the APP website: <http://practice.aap.org/content.aspx?aid=1940&nodeID=2025>

Negotiating with Private Insurance

Providers may be able to negotiate payment rates for vaccine administration, vaccine storage and handling, patient education and vaccine consultation. High immunization rates may be a negotiating point with health plans that must meet certain performance criteria. Consider negotiating provisions to address:

- Payment for new vaccines
- Vaccine price increases
- New immunization recommendations

For more information: www.pedialink.org/cme/_coursefinder/CMEdetail.cfm?aid=31177&area=liveCME

Separate and Label Public and Private Vaccine Inventory

Managing vaccine inventory will become even more important as Washington moves away from universal vaccines. Develop and use a system that works for your practice, such as labeling the vaccine boxes and labeling shelves or bins.

New DOH Web-page & Phone Number for Universal Vaccine Changes

Washington State Department of Health Immunization Program CHILD Profile

Phone: 1-866-397-0337 E-mail: UniversalChanges@doh.wa.gov

Web-site: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/immunize/providers/universal.htm>

Attached to this e-mail is a PowerPoint presentation, including speaker's notes, that may be very helpful. To access the speaker's notes, go to "normal view" and scroll down to the bottom of the page. Or, to print with speaker's notes go to: File; Print; Note pages; Grayscale; Preview and Print.

Please note: Whatcom County Health Department will not offer HPV vaccine to children (18 and under) who have private insurance. They will be referred back to their medical home for immunizations. Thank you for working with us to assure children have continued access to vaccine.

Hepatitis B Vaccine Supply

Hepatitis B vaccine will be in short supply throughout the summer months. There are no changes in the vaccination recommendations, but each state is receiving a monthly allocation amount. Some practices may already have noted the limitations when ordering. There should be ample supply to meet demands, but again, please do not over order. If you are running low, call the health department for additional vaccine.

Resources Enclosed:

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Insured Status Definition
- Underinsured Status Definition
- American Indian or Alaska Native Status Definition
- Provider Resources for Purchasing Vaccine
- Health Plan Contacts for Coverage & Billing Questions