

Vax Facts

E-NEWS FROM THE NORTH CAROLINA IMMUNIZATION BRANCH

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Welcome!

Thanks for subscribing to *Vax Facts*, the North Carolina Immunization Branch's e-newsletter. We hope this will help us stay connected to immunization providers across North Carolina. Feel free to share this document with whomever you choose and encourage your colleagues to subscribe. Sign up instructions are at the end of this e-newsletter.

What's the Immunization Branch Up To?

Vaccine Brand Choice: Providers enrolled in the NCIP may now choose which brand of vaccines they'd like to receive. If a particular brand is not available, the Branch may ship an equivalent brand without notification. Please refer to the memo dated [November 15, 2010](#) for complete details.

Expanded availability: NCIP providers may offer certain state-supplied vaccines to qualifying adults. Any person entering a four-year college or university in North Carolina for the first time may now receive state-supplied MCV4, Tdap, MMR and influenza vaccines. Healthcare workers may now receive state-supplied Tdap vaccine. Please refer to the coverage criteria and the memo dated [November 15, 2010](#) for complete details.

2011 Immunization Conference Survey: We'd like your ideas for break-out session topics for next year's Immunization Conference. Follow [this link](#) to complete a short survey on conference topics.

Program Change: Local health departments may share their remaining transitional vaccine with private providers in their communities as long as the vaccine is administered according to the appropriate coverage criteria. Additional information on the change is available on the [program change page](#) of our website.

Free Education Materials Available for Order: Visit the Immunization Branch's [Materials Request Page](#) to view, print and order programmatic and educational resources for free. Just download the order form, fill it out, and fax it to us. You'll also find two order forms with resources on special topics. Order [Flu Prevention Resources](#) and [Childhood Immunization Education Resources](#) for your office today!

Program Requirements: Are You In Compliance?

Reporting Out-of-Range Temperatures

Did you know providers are required to call the Immunization Branch to report out-of-range temperatures, even if their vaccine storage unit is only one degree out of range? While you may be familiar with this requirement, site visits conducted in 2009 revealed 15 percent of providers offices in North Carolina documented temperatures out of range on temperature logs and took no action. Vaccines should not remain in a nonfunctioning vaccine storage unit or a unit that is not in range.

Here are the steps to take if you discover your storage unit is not in range:

- Move the vaccine to a properly functioning vaccine storage unit,
- Isolate the affected vaccine vials or packages,

- Mark them "DO NOT USE,"
- Call the Immunization Branch Help Desk immediately at 1-877-873-6247, and
- Document on the temperature log any actions taken regarding the out-of-range temperatures.

According to North Carolina's [Financial Restitution Policy](#), providers who waste state-supplied vaccine may have to pay the cost of state-supplied vaccines that were wasted due to provider's failure to properly store, handle, or rotate the vaccine. Be sure your facility maintains [refrigerator](#) and [freezer](#) temperature logs and reports out-of-range incidents right away!

NCIR Tips

New Online NCIR Classes

The Immunization Branch has launched a new initiative aimed at helping our providers utilize all the Registry has to offer. In late October, we hosted our first online NCIR training session with a focus on the using the newly designed Mass Vax Grid Entry form. This new form has helped dramatically reduce the number of duplicate clients entered during flu vaccination clinics. In December, sessions will focus on the NC Identity Management Service Update and Accountability Reports.

There is no need to pre-register for the session. Simply log on to the NCIR and look under the Announcements section for a link to join the sessions. You'll also need to dial in via telephone to hear the presentation - just remember to mute your phone! Each session is approximately 30 minutes.

Upcoming online training sessions:

Date	Time	Title	Additional Information
December 8, 2010	9am	NC Identity Management Service (NCID) Update	Learn how changes to NCID login screen will affect the NCIR
The December 8, 2010 session at 12pm has been canceled			
December 15, 2010	9am	Using Accountability Reports	Learn how to execute and utilize accountability reports
December 15, 2010	12pm	Using Accountability Reports	Learn how to execute and utilize accountability reports

NCIR Definitions

Vaccine Group: A category that describes one type of vaccination. For example, the vaccine trade names Engerix-B and Recombivax fall under the Hepatitis B vaccine group; whereas, Comvax falls under both the Hepatitis B and Hib vaccine groups.

Clinician's Corner

Booster Dose of Meningococcal Vaccine Now Recommended

On Oct. 27, 2010, the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted to recommend a booster dose of meningococcal vaccine (MCV4) five years after the routine recommendation at 11-12 years of age. Children receiving their first dose after 12 years of age should receive a second dose five years later.

The Committee also voted to recommend a two dose series with booster doses every five years for children with high risk conditions such as HIV and asplenia. The Committee added the booster dose to the VFC program, which is effective immediately. The two doses of MCV4 represent off label use of the vaccine, which

is currently licensed for a single dose.

The [NCIP Coverage Criteria](#) has been updated to reflect this change.

General Recommendations for Meningococcal conjugate vaccine

- Certain high-risk children from ages 2 through 10. The ACIP now recommends a two dose series with booster every five years for children with high risk conditions.
- Pre-teens/Adolescents: Meningococcal conjugate vaccine is routinely recommended for all 11- through 18-year-old adolescents. The ACIP now recommends a booster dose be given five years after the initial dose all 11- through 18-year-old adolescents should receive.
- Adults: Either meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine or meningococcal conjugate vaccine is recommended for adults if they:
 - Are a college freshman living in a dormitory
 - Are a military recruit
 - Have a damaged spleen or a spleen that has been removed
 - Have terminal complement deficiency
 - Are a microbiologist who is routinely exposed to *Neisseria meningitidis* (the causal pathogen)
 - Are traveling to or residing in countries in which the disease is common.

Kudos

Marti Wolf

Congratulations to Marti Wolf, a clinical programs director with the North Carolina Community Health Center Association! The American Nurses Association recently recognized Marti's work with a certificate of achievement for her efforts to raise adolescent immunization rates statewide. Marti partnered with the Immunization Branch and vaccine manufacturer Sanofi Pasteur to assess adolescent immunization rates among Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and reward the FQHC with the most improved rates over the month of April 2010 with a pizza party. Overall improvement among participating FQHCs during April was 26 percent! Congratulations, Marti, for your hard work!

Union County Vaccinates School Staff

Kudos to Lydia Lyon, Adult Health Supervisor at Union County Health Department, and her team for vaccinating school staff and their families during a hugely successful immunization drive. The health department administered 1,241 flu vaccines and 591 Tdap vaccines during a six-day blitz this fall.

Earlier this year, the health department reached out to all 53 schools in Union County to find out whether they'd be interested in flu vaccination clinics for staff. The answer was a resounding "yes!" Working with school nurses, Lydia and her team got the word out about the clinics, which were held at 10 schools and one other location over six days. They were sure to remind school staff to bring in their insurance cards, so the county could bill their insurance company.

Lydia had a hunch some staff might be interested in a Tdap vaccine as well. Her hunch was right because in just two day's time the county's supply of 150 doses of Tdap was completely used up and Lydia had to put in a request to borrow some vaccine from the Immunization Branch.

Lydia was thrilled so many school staff were interested. "We got to give them our message about pertussis and stress that they are high risk," she said. As word of mouth grew about the Tdap vaccine, Lydia noticed expectant fathers, and postpartum moms and dads were coming by to get vaccinated and protect their new infants.

The effort is ongoing. The health department plans to reach out periodically throughout the year to ensure new school staff members are immunized. Lydia is confident this effort has enhanced the relationship between the health department and school system in Union County.

Kudos to Lydia, the Union County Health Department and school nurses, for reaching out to schools in a unique way and ensuring your community is protected!

If you would like to recognize an immunization champion with a mention in the Kudos section of *Vax Facts*, send an email to Amy Caruso at amy.caruso@dhhs.nc.gov.

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