

Vax Facts

E-NEWS FROM THE NORTH CAROLINA IMMUNIZATION BRANCH

Nov. 1, 2011

Volume 2, Number 7

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 Going On In the Immunization Branch?

Vax Facts Returns:

After a brief hiatus, we are happy to announce the return of Vax Facts. While this month's edition is condensed to provide you with some key updates, the full edition of the e-newsletter will return in December.

Presentations from the 2011 North Carolina Immunization Conference: Now Online!

Presentations from this year's conference held in August are now available on our website. You can access them [here](#).

Vaccinations Protect Generations:

In September, the Immunization Branch launched a new media campaign entitled "Vaccinations Protect Generations". The campaign features television, print, radio and internet ads which stress the importance of vaccinations. Click this [link](#) to check out the campaign's website.

Immunization Branch Welcomes New Employees

We would like to welcome Michele Burton, Kita Wright and Patricia Ott to the Immunization Branch. Michele serves as the branch's public information officer. Kita is the Immunization Program Consultant and Patricia is the Immunization Nurse Consultant for the Mecklenburg Region.

2011-2012 Influenza Update

Fall season is here, and unfortunately so is the flu. Although traditionally this is the time of year in which influenza activity increases, the impact of flu season can be greatly reduced with education and through vaccination. Below are some important points and reminders regarding the 2011-2012 flu season.

Recommendations

- The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) published recommendations for the [Prevention and Control of Influenza with Vaccines](#) in the Aug. 26, 2011, edition of the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR).
- The ACIP recommends annual influenza vaccination for **all persons aged six months and older**.
- All health care workers need a flu vaccine. Be sure to get your vaccine and encourage your colleagues to

do the same.

2011-2012 Influenza Vaccine

- The 2011–2012 U.S. seasonal influenza vaccine virus strains are identical to those contained in the 2010–2011 vaccine. These include: A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)-like, A/Perth/16/2009 (H3N2)-like, and B/Brisbane/60/2008-like antigens.
- This year Fluzone Intradermal was approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and is a new type of flu shot that injects less antigen in a smaller volume into the dermal layer of the skin. It differs from the regular flu shot, which is injected into the muscle. Although it contains less antigen than the regular flu shot, it produces a comparable immune response. Fluzone Intradermal is only approved for use in adults ages 18 through 64 years of age.

2011-2012 NCIP Flu Vaccine Distribution

- Total of 555,000 were made available to NCIP.
- Providers have pre-booked 85 percent of that total or 466,000 doses.
- All of the vaccine has been distributed to physicians' offices and we are shipping orders as they arrive.
- 0.5mL prefilled syringes are no longer available for order from the NCIP. Providers wishing to use single-dose formulations should order single-dose vials or nasal sprayers.

REMEMBER! State-supplied influenza vaccine should only be used for VFC-eligible children, college students and health care workers.

Education & Training

Check out the Influenza Training Module which was recently added to the [You Call the Shots Portal](#) on the CDC website. This interactive web-based immunization training course is designed to provide key immunization knowledge in a very basic step-by-step manner. It presents practice-oriented content about immunization. No cost continuing education credits are available upon completion of the online evaluation until Sept. 1, 2013.

NCIR Tips

Combining Vaccine Lot Numbers in NCIR

When a new order of state-supplied vaccine is shipped to your practice, be sure to compare the new inventory lot numbers with any currently *inactive* lot numbers in NCIR. NCIR will not merge new inventory with the same lot number as an existing *inactive* lot in NCIR. If a match is found, make the inactive lot active before accepting the order, and NCIR will automatically merge the two lots. After accepting the new order, you can inactivate the lot again if you choose to do so.

Online NCIR Classes

Join us for free online NCIR training sessions on the second Wednesday of each month at 9 a.m. with a repeat session at 1 p.m. There is no need to pre-register. 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
Nov. 9, 2011	9 a.m. and 1 p.m.	NCIP Borrowing/ Replacement Policy and the NCIR	The NCIP Borrowing/Replacement Policy must be followed when a provider borrows a VFC vaccine to administer to a non-VFC eligible patient or vice versa due to an unexpected lack of vaccine.

			The borrowing must also be accounted for in NCIR.
Dec. 14, 2011	9 a.m. and 1 p.m.	NCIR Maintenance	It's time to do some end of the year "housekeeping" in NCIR. Join IB staff to learn how to make sure all users, clinicians and site information is up to date in NCIR. It's also time to make sure inventory is balanced and accounted for in the registry.

Kudos

Dr. Sam Katz

Congratulations to Dr. Sam Katz who was presented with the Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award during the September Immunization Advisory Committee Meeting. The award is the highest honor given by the Governor's office to individuals who have a proven record of extraordinary service to the state for their contributions to the community, an extra effort in their careers and many years of service to their organization.

Coastal Meeting Attendees

Thank you to Cyndi Simmons and Jeanna Condron-Cheek with the Brunswick County Health Department and to Judith Flagge and Debbie Dutton from the Dare County Department of Public Health, who all traveled to and from Raleigh on Sept. 14 to attend the NC Immunization Coalition Meeting, where they each presented information on successful efforts to locate flu clinics in schools and to discuss their flu outreach in other county locations, just days after Hurricane Irene touched down on the coast.

News You Can Use

NC Health Choice Claims/Medicaid: As you may know, effective Oct.1, 2011, Medicaid began handling the claims for NC Health Choice (NCHC), which were previously handled by Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

Although most NCHC children will still be considered insured for immunization purposes, there is one exception. Because American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children are VFC eligible, NCHC is instructing providers to administer VFC vaccine to all AI/AN children and bill only the administration fee to NCHC for those children. All other NCHC children (that is, non-AI/AN children) should be administered purchased vaccine. In that case, both the vaccine and the administration fee may be billed to NCHC.

For more detailed guidance, you may want to review the NCHC related bulletin articles published in the Oct. 2011 Medicaid bulletin: <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dma/bulletin/1011bulletin.html>

Meningococcal VIS: A new [vaccine information statement](#) for meningococcal was released on 10/14/11.

World Pneumonia Day is Nov. 12: Concerned citizens around the world are wearing blue on World Pneumonia Day to show their support for the fight against pneumonia. Learn more [here!](#)

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Contact Information

NC Immunization Branch • 1917 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, NC 27699

Phone: 919-707-5550 • Fax: 919-870-4824 • Website: www.immunize.nc.gov

Help Desk • Phone: 877-873-6247 • Fax: 800-544-3058 • Email: ncirhelp@dhhs.nc.gov

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