

# Vax Facts

E-NEWS FROM THE NORTH CAROLINA IMMUNIZATION BRANCH

Sept. 1, 2012

Volume 3, Number 8

## 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 at the Immunization Branch?

### **IMPORTANT!** Upcoming Changes Coming to the North Carolina Immunization Program

Effective, Oct. 1, some important federally-required changes will take place that will affect the North Carolina Immunization Program.

The changes involve:

#### Providers Serving Underinsured Children

Effective Oct. 1, private providers may no longer serve VFC children who are in the category of underinsured. They may only serve VFC children who are either Medicaid eligible, American Indian/Alaskan native, or uninsured.

#### *What does underinsured mean?*

The following children are considered underinsured if:

- *they have commercial (private) health insurance but the coverage does not include vaccines\*;*
- *their insurance covers only selected vaccines (in this scenario, only non-covered vaccines may be provided through VFC); or,*
- *their insurance caps vaccine coverage at a certain amount – once that coverage amount is reached, these children are categorized as underinsured.*

*\* Note: Children whose health insurance covers vaccinations are not eligible for VFC vaccines, even when a claim for the cost of the vaccine and its administration would be denied for payment by the insurance carrier because the plan's deductible had not been met or because the insurance did not cover the total cost of the vaccine.*

#### Coverage Changes

Due to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the CDC has eliminated federal funding for the vaccination of insured patients. This change affects the NCIP, thus resulting in changes to our coverage criteria.

Please refer to the Immunization Branch [website](#) to view memos and FAQ's which contain detailed information regarding these changes.

## **Immunization Branch Hosts Regional Workshops**

In an effort to ensure vaccine availability and efficacy through appropriate vaccine storage, handling and

accountability, the Immunization Branch has been hosting regional workshops in various cities across the state. Workshops have already been held in Cary, Wilmington, Asheville and Charlotte. There are two remaining workshops that will be held in September:

Sept. 12 – Greenville

Sept. 27 – Greensboro

The sessions are free, but registration is necessary. Please see [this memo](#) for more information and to register.

### **Coverage Criteria Updated**

The following information was added to the [Coverage Criteria](#) on July 24:

2012-2013 Influenza Vaccine Coverage Criteria: Influenza vaccine provided by the NCIP is available for children 6 months through 18 years of age who are eligible for the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. Additionally, regardless of age or insurance status, persons attending a North Carolina college or university, and close contacts of infants who are less than 6 months of age are eligible for NCIP inactivated influenza vaccine (TIV). Close contacts include, but are not limited to, household members, clinical staff, day care personnel, etcetera, of any age. Because there is no federal contract for LAIV this year, the NCIP will not be able to provide LAIV for adults. Please refer to the [memo](#) dated July 10, 2012.

### **Pertussis Numbers Are Climbing! Have YOU Been Vaccinated?**

Pertussis in North Carolina continues to be on the rise. With 297 cases already reported this year, it is just as important to make sure that health care personnel are protected against this disease. Tdap vaccine is the best source of protection.

Health care personnel include but are not limited to physicians, other primary care providers, nurses, aides, respiratory therapists, radiology technicians, students (e.g., medical, nursing, and pharmaceutical), dentists, social workers, chaplains, volunteers, and dietary and clerical workers.

### **New Immunization Law Training Module Available**

The N.C. Immunization Branch has a new [online module](#) available about Immunization Law. The voice-enabled course will help users to interpret and implement immunization laws, identify appropriate exemptions, and answer common immunization law questions. Nurses can earn 0.75 contact hours for completing the module, test, and evaluation.

### **Garrett's Law Materials**

[Garrett's law materials](#) have been updated on the Immunization Branch website. Garrett's law was enacted in 2004. It mandates schools provide parents and guardians with information about meningococcal meningitis, HPV, and influenza and the vaccines that protect against these diseases.

### **Locating Immunization Records**

Did you know that the Immunization Branch does not locate immunization records for clients? Do you know how to locate an immunization record when it is not located in the NCIR?

The My Family and Me Section of the Immunization Branch's website contains [step-by-step instructions and tips](#) on how to locate immunization records for children and adults.

### **Immunization Branch Welcomes New Health Educator**

The Immunization Branch is pleased to welcome **Nikita Spears** to its staff. Nikita joins the branch as a public health educator and brings local health department experience, state level experience in HIV/STD and most recently has worked with Wake County Human Services in the 4-H Youth Development Program. At the branch, she will help us assess our educational needs and provide educational opportunities based on

assessment findings. Welcome Nikita!

## Most Current VISs

As of Sept. 1, the most recent versions of the [Vaccine Information Statements](#) (VIS) are as follows:

DTaP/DT	5/17/07	MMR	4/20/12
Hepatitis A	10/25/11	MMRV	5/21/10
Hepatitis B	2/12/12	PCV13	4/16/10
Hib	12/16/98	PPSV	10/6/09
HPV – Cervarix	5/3/11	Polio	11/8/11
HPV – Gardasil	2/22/12	Rabies	10/6/09
Influenza (inactive)	7/2/12	Rotavirus	12/6/10
Influenza (live)	7/2/12	Shingles	10/6/09
Japanese encephalitis	12/7/11	Td/Tdap	1/24/12
Meningococcal	10/14/11	Typhoid	5/29/12
Multi-vaccine (VIS) (for 6 vaccines given to infants/children: DTap, IPV, Hib, Hep B, PCV, RV)	9/18/08	Varicella	3/13/08
		Yellow fever	3/30/11

## News You Can Use

### DPH is Now on Twitter!

The North Carolina Division of Public Health officially launched its Twitter page on Aug. 1.

The division will use Twitter to share news releases, as well as information that is timely or urgent in nature, such as:

- Alerts of disease outbreaks and dangerous conditions affecting the public's health
- Health actions (e.g., heat safety, back to school immunizations, etc.)
- Information about monthly health observances
- Grant opportunities

To follow DPH, visit <http://twitter.com/ncpublichealth>.

### Secretary Delia Kicks off National Immunization Awareness Month by Receiving a Tdap Vaccine

N.C. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Al Delia recently visited the Alamance County Health Department to help kick off National Immunization Awareness Month in August. During his visit, Secretary Delia received his Tdap vaccine to help encouraged families to get the Tdap vaccine this year to help prevent the spread of pertussis.

### H3N2 Variant ("H3N2v") Influenza Virus Alert

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has reported 276 cases of H3N2v since July 2012 across 10 states. The virus includes genes from the 2009 H1N1 virus that allow it to spread more easily from pigs to humans- and possibly from human to humans – as compared to other swine influenza viruses. Although some person-to-person spread was seen when the first 12 cases of H3N2v were detected in 2011, almost all cases in 2012 have involved contact with pigs at agricultural fairs.

People going to fairs should take precautions, including washing hands, avoiding eating in animal pens, and staying clear of obviously sick animals. Those at high risk for flu complications should consider avoiding exposure to pigs and swine barns this summer, especially if sick pigs have been identified. Updates and additional information are available at [www.cdc.gov/flu/swineflu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swineflu) and [www.flu.nc.gov](http://www.flu.nc.gov).

H3N2v is related to human flu viruses from the 1990s, so adults should have some immunity against these viruses but young children probably do not. Early steps to make a vaccine against H3N2v have been taken, but no decision to mass produce has been made. This year's seasonal flu vaccine will not provide protection against H3N2v.

## One and Only 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 (SIPC), to raise awareness among patients and healthcare providers about safe injection practices. The campaign aims to eradicate outbreaks resulting from unsafe injection practices. The site features a variety of campaign resources, including print, video and audio, social media tips and more.

Check out what [North Carolina](#) is doing to support this effort.

## Subscribe to Vax Facts

Please follow the instructions below to add yourself to our contact list.

Step One: Send an email to this address: [ncip.newsletter-subscribe@lists.ncmail.net](mailto:ncip.newsletter-subscribe@lists.ncmail.net). There's no need to include any special instructions in the subject line or in the body of the email message you send.

Step Two: Respond to the system-generated confirmation email. Read this email carefully and follow the included instructions to complete the sign-up process. Please note, you must respond to this system-generated confirmation email within three days. The easiest way to complete the sign-up process is by simply replying to the confirmation email.

Step Three: Look for a system-generated welcome message. Once you receive this message, you are signed up to receive Vax Facts.

You may unsubscribe by sending an email to: [ncip.newsletter-unsubscribe@lists.ncmail.net](mailto:ncip.newsletter-unsubscribe@lists.ncmail.net).

## 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](http://www.immunize.nc.gov)

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

State of North Carolina | Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Public Health | Immunization Branch  
[www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov)

N.C. DHHS is an equal opportunity employer and provider. 9/12

