

KEEPING CT KIDS HEALTHY

News from the Connecticut Vaccine Program



Department of Public Health Immunization Program

Summer 2013

A Message from Dr. Jewel Mullen Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Public Health

August is National Immunization Awareness Month, an observance recognized across the country to highlight the importance of immunizations, one of the top 10 public health accomplishments of the 20th Century, according to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC).

While immunizations have significantly reduced the incidence of many serious infectious diseases, vaccination rates for some diseases are not meeting national public health goals. We also need to remind people that immunizations aren't just for children—they are needed throughout our lifetime.

A strong provider recommendation is one of the best ways to ensure patients get the vaccinations they need when they need them, and health care professionals are parents' most trusted source of information about vaccines for their children. You play a critical role in supporting parents in understanding and choosing vaccines.

The CDC, in conjunction with the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians, have resources that provide valuable communications strategies to help with your vaccine conversations with parents: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/conversations. At this site you can also download and print materials to help parents understand vaccine-benefits and risks. Do you need materials in Spanish for your patients? CDC has information in Spanish about each vaccine-preventable disease and related immunizations. www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/fact-sheet-parents-sp.html

The National Public Health Information Coalition (NPHIC) has also assembled a National Immunization Awareness Month communication toolkit with assistance from CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. The toolkit is designed to help public health information officers, immunization program managers, health care professionals, coalitions, advocates and partner organizations work together to communicate about the importance of immunizations during August. For more information and to view the tool kit, please visit www.nphic.org/niam.

This issue of the *CVP Update* answers many of the questions we receive concerning influenza vaccine. I hope this information is helpful. Thank you for all that you do to keep Connecticut's children healthy.



The Connecticut Vaccine Program ensures all children in the state receive the vaccinations they need to stay healthy. For more information, visit us at www.ct.gov/dph/cvp. Or contact us at (860) 509-7929 or dph.immunizations@ct.gov

INFLUENZA VACCINE—ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Influenza vaccine is unlike any other vaccine provided by the CVP: it has to be pre-booked several months in advance and usually arrives in several shipments each month. The information below summarizes answers to frequently asked questions received by the CVP from providers:

Purchasing Influenza Vaccine

The process of pre-booking flu vaccine by the CVP begins in February after the World Health Organization (WHO) identifies the different strains of influenza that will be included in each year's vaccine for North America. Once that process occurs, the Centers For Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) negotiates a contract with the different manufacturers of flu vaccine. After the contract is in place, each state has approximately two weeks to complete the actual pre-booking process.

Determining How Much Flu and Which Formulations to Purchase

Careful consideration of several of factors, including the number of doses distributed to and administered by our providers the previous year, the age indications of each particular formulation, the make-up of each formulation (e.g. trivalent or quadrivalent) and the cost of each of the formulations helps determine the number of these formulations to make available to our providers. Once the CVP has sent the influenza pre-booking request to the CDC, it is considered an actual order that cannot be modified or cancelled.

Availability of Vaccine

Influenza vaccine usually becomes available in late July or early August depending on release of each formulation by the manufacturers. All CVP influenza vaccine is shipped by the various manufacturers to McKesson's national distribution center in Memphis, TN. McKesson notifies the CVP when influenza vaccine has arrived and is available for distribution to our providers.

Processing Orders

Once vaccine is available for ordering, the CVP sends out a memo for all providers to begin placing orders for influenza vaccine. There may not be enough flu vaccine for providers to receive all their request in one shipment but the CVP will continue to fill each provider's order throughout the course of each month until they receive 100 % of what they requested. Providers can order as often as they need to during the course of a month, but should keep in mind to only order what they truly need and what they can safely store in their refrigerator.

For the past two years, CDC asked us what percentage of our FluMist order we would like to receive in the 1st half of August, 2nd half of August, 1st half of September, 2nd half of September, 1st half of October and 2nd half of October. This year, we ordered a total of 60,000 doses of FluMist and asked for 10,000 doses for each half month, so we expect 10,000 doses in the first half of August. If we receive orders from providers for 15,000 doses of FluMist and we only have 10,000 doses available, each provider will receive 70 % of their request and then we will try to fill the remaining 30 % as we receive more product during the course of the month.

Questions concerning influenza vaccine or any other vaccine provided by the CVP can be sent to Mick Bolduc CVP Vaccine Coordinator at michael.bolduc@ct.gov or (860) 509-7940.