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[www.health.ri.gov](http://www.health.ri.gov)

## **Immunization Program Update**

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Date: July 2, 2010  
To: Pediatric Vaccine Providers  
From: Patricia Raymond, RN, MPH  
Subject: Vaccine Policy Update

On March 19, 2010, the Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) convened the Rhode Island Vaccine Advisory Committee to receive feedback and guidance on state vaccine policy. The committee's recommendations to HEALTH include:

1. Provide HPV vaccine for males nine through 18 years of age to protect against genital warts and the transmission of human papillomavirus (HPV) to females; Coordinate an educational campaign about HPV vaccine safety and its value in preventing HPV infection.
2. Provide seasonal flu vaccine to providers as soon as it is available so that children can be vaccinated at their well child visits.
3. Improve vaccine policy communications to providers.
4. Replace Prevnar (PCV) 7 with the newly licensed PCV13. (See <http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2016.pdf> for ACIP guidelines on the PCV13 vaccination schedule)

The sections below outline changes to state vaccine policy (<http://www.health.ri.gov/immunization/about/vaccinepolicy/index.php>), based on these recommendations.

### **HPV Vaccine Availability for Males**

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has provided a "permissive" recommendation that the quadrivalent human papillomavirus vaccine (HPV4-Gardasil) may be given to males aged nine through 26 years to reduce the likelihood of acquiring genital warts and that HPV4 vaccine is most effective when given before exposure to HPV through sexual contact. The recommendations were published in CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) on May 28, 2010 and are available at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/news/news-pubs.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/news/news-pubs.htm)

### **Permissive vs. Routine Vaccine Recommendations:**

According to ACIP, a "permissive" vaccine recommendation implies that vaccine should either be provided upon parental request or proactively offered during office visits. In contrast, a "routine" vaccine recommendation means that vaccine should be proactively provided as the standard of care. At this time, the ACIP does not recommend HPV4 for routine use in males or as part of a vaccine "catch-up" campaign.

### **Ordering HPV Vaccine for Males:**

In response to ACIP guidelines, HEALTH will begin supplying HPV4 vaccine for permissive use in males nine through 18 years of age in July through our universal state-supplied vaccine program. Providers may begin ordering with their next vaccine orders. Please edit your "Par Stock" accordingly on your monthly order form.

Note: United Healthcare's vaccine policy does not cover permissive vaccine recommendations. Therefore, although the vaccine will be provided at no cost to providers by the state, United Healthcare will not reimburse for the administration fee.

HEALTH is working with the Rhode Island Cancer Coalition's prevention workgroup to develop a statewide educational campaign to raise awareness among the public about human papillomavirus and the HPV vaccine.

## **2010-2011 Seasonal Influenza Updates**

### **ACIP Makes Influenza Vaccination Recommendation Universal:**

In February 2010, ACIP expanded seasonal influenza vaccine recommendations to include the vaccination of all people six months of age and older for the upcoming 2010-2011 flu season. According to CDC, previous recommendations prevented many people in high-risk groups from receiving vaccine because they did not know that they were considered "high risk" or that they were recommended to receive the vaccine. A universal recommendation will help to alleviate public confusion over vaccine recommendations and will support providers in promoting vaccination for all patients, regardless of risk status.

### **Development of a Statewide Seasonal Flu Vaccination Plan:**

HEALTH received valuable feedback from providers and other partners during an evaluation of our H1N1 flu response. We are currently collaborating with providers, schools, colleges, and other groups to integrate best practices and lessons learned into a comprehensive, statewide seasonal flu vaccination plan. More information about the statewide flu vaccination plan will be provided as it becomes available.

### **Delivery of Seasonal Flu Vaccine for the 2010-2011 Flu Season:**

Date ranges for the delivery of seasonal flu vaccine differ by manufacturer. In general, for the 2010-2011 flu season, we can expect to receive 40-50% of total seasonal flu vaccine shipments by the end of September, with the remaining balance delivered by the end of October. MedImmune (FluMist) is suggesting that vaccine may be available as early as August. These dates are always subject to change, but we will do our best to get seasonal flu vaccine out to Rhode Island providers as soon as it is available.

### **Improving Communications with Providers**

HEALTH is working to improve the way we communicate vaccine policy changes, updates, and advisories to providers. Surveys to providers enrolled in our H1N1 vaccine program provided valuable feedback on the preferred format, frequency, and channels for provider communications. We will update vaccine providers with more information on how to access the latest information from HEALTH as changes are implemented. We also welcome additional suggestions for improving provider communications. These can be emailed to [vaccine@health.ri.gov](mailto:vaccine@health.ri.gov).