

VACCINES FOR CHILDREN



Dallas County
Health and Human Services

SPRING 2012 - NEWS LETTER

Texas Vaccines For Children *Changes to* **Patient Eligibility Screening**

The Federal Vaccines for Children Program (VFC) was initiated by the passage of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993, which guaranteed vaccines would be available at no cost to providers, in order to immunize children birth

through 18 years of age that meet eligibility requirements. Today there are more than 6500 Texas providers enrolled in the Texas Vaccines for Children Program and Texas leads the nation in the number of uninsured and underinsured children. Funding for the VFC program is approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and allocated through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC buys vaccines at a discount and distributes them to grantees, such as the state health departments and certain local and territorial public health agencies.

In turn these grantees distribute them at no charge to those private physi-

cians' offices and public health clinics registered as VFC providers. Children who are eligible for VFC vaccines are entitled to receive pediatric vaccines that are recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

The Department of State Health Services has developed policy changes to the TVFC childhood vaccine program in response to reductions in state and federal immunization funds, increased federal accountability for publicly-funded vaccines, as well as increases in prices for some vaccines.

**Effective January 1, 2012, the definition of underinsured has been modified and pertains to all Local Health Departments, DSHS public health clinics and TVFC providers. For a child to be considered under-

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Patient Eligibility Screening Continued from cover

insured, they must meet one of the following criteria to receive TVFC vaccine:

1. A child has commercial (private) health insurance, but coverage does not include vaccines OR
2. A child whose insurance covers only selected vaccines (TVFC-eligible for non-covered vaccines only) OR
3. A child whose insurance caps vaccine coverage at a certain amount. Once that coverage amount is reached, the child is categorized as underinsured.

This new definition states that insured children who have high co-pays, or unmet deductibles are no longer considered underinsured. Fully insured children are not eligible for TVFC vaccine.

TVFC Patient Eligibility

The following changes to TVFC patient eligibility are effective beginning January 1, 2012.

1. Children who have private insurance that covers vaccines will no longer be eligible for TVFC vaccines in public health department clinics, but instead will be referred to their medical home for immunization services. In some cases, local health departments may be the medical home that provides comprehensive healthcare services. In these cases, private insurance is accepted in those public health settings. Private stock vaccine must be purchased and/or acquired in order to continue vaccinating fully, privately insured children.

2. Individuals 19 and older who begin a vaccine series at age 18 or younger (and TVFC-eligible), may only finish that series at public health clinics that are Adult Vaccine Safety Net (ASN) providers (typically the public health department), provided the series is completed prior to their 20th birthday. Historically providers have been able to vaccinate these individuals at any TVFC enrolled site.
3. The definition of "Underinsured" will be modified as described in the section below. Insured children with vaccine coverage who have high copays or deductibles are no longer considered underinsured. These children are now considered fully, privately insured and are no longer eligible for TVFC vaccines. Children qualifying under the new

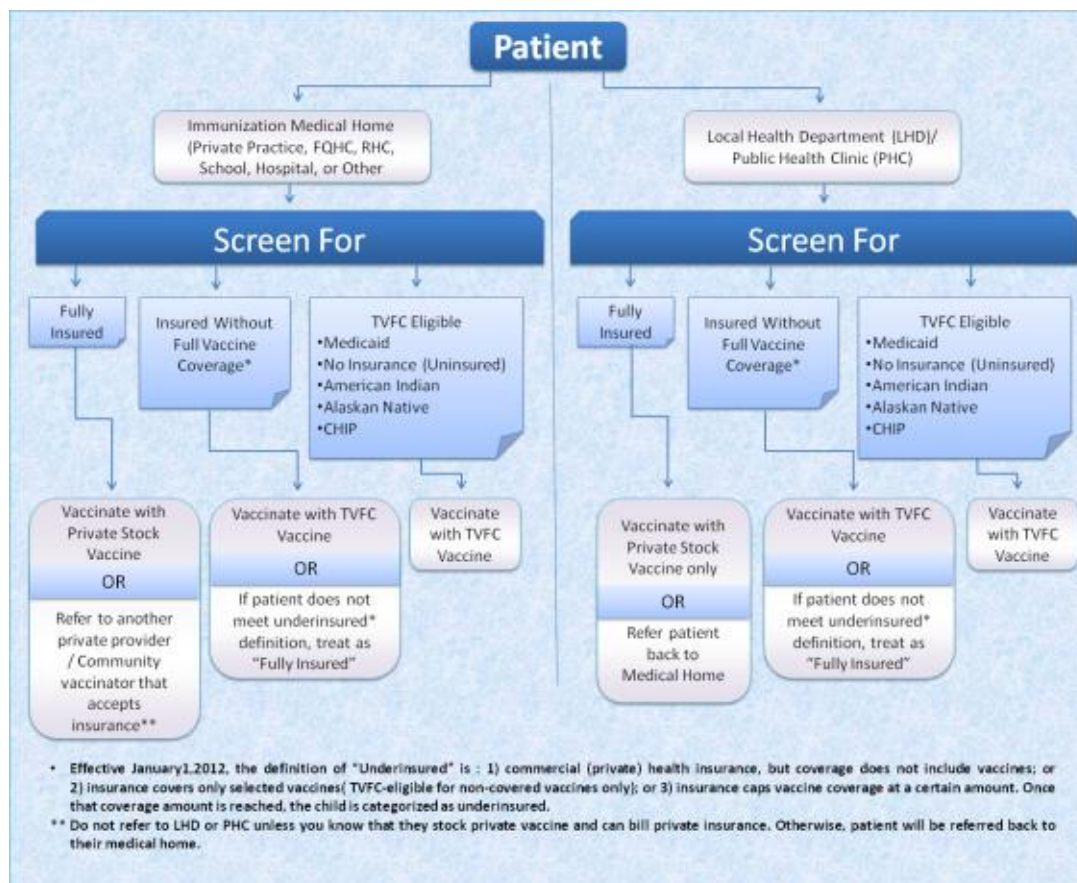
definition of underinsured will continue to be eligible to receive vaccines in any TVFC-enrolled provider office. Underinsured children are not required to be referred to a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) or Rural Health Clinic (RHC).

Adult Safety Net Policy Updates

DSHS has refined the vaccines and patient eligibility policies for Adult Safety Net Providers. The primary changes include reducing the number of vaccines available through the ASN program, and limiting the eligibility to uninsured adults only. The ASN eligibility criteria include vaccination of uninsured adults, 19 years and older in accordance with the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations for the following vaccines only:

1. Hepatitis B
2. Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR)
3. Tetanus/Diphtheria, and Acellular Pertussis (Tdap) and Tetanus /Diphtheria (Td)
4. Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine (MCV4) (Only available through February 2012 as per DSHS)
5. Influenza (DSHS Health Service Regions only) and
6. Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine (PPSV) (DSHS Health Service Regions only)

Patient Screening Decision Tree



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Meningococcal Disease

Meningococcal vaccination is a requirement for the State of Texas, to enter into college.

Bacterial Meningitis

Did you know that there are approximately 1,000 cases of meningococcal disease in the United States each year? Meningococcal disease can be very serious – even life-threatening – in 48 hours or less. Meningococcal disease can refer to any illness that is caused by *Neisseria meningitidis*, also known as meningococcus bacteria. The two most severe and common illnesses caused by *Neisseria meningitidis* include meningitis (infection of the fluid and lining around the brain) and septicemia (bloodstream infection).

Meningococcal disease is the leading cause of bacterial meningitis in children 2 through 18 years of age in the United States. Although anyone can get meningitis, pre-teens, and adolescents, college freshman who live in dormitories and travelers to countries where

meningitis is always present are at an increased risk for meningococcal disease. As of 2009, a total of 34 states have adopted legislation requiring colleges to provide information on risks of meningococcal disease to incoming students and/or students residing on campus, and 15 states have mandated vaccination for certain students, unless a vaccination waiver is provided.

The 82nd Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2011, revised existing statutory requirements for higher education students related to vaccination against bacterial meningitis. The revision now requires all entering students to show evidence of an initial bacterial meningitis vaccine or a booster dose during the five-year period preceding, and at least 10 days prior to, the first day of the first semester in which the student initially enrolls at an institution.

An entering student includes a first-time

student of an institution of higher education, private, or independent institution of higher education and includes a transfer student, or a student who previously attended an institution of higher education before January 1, 2012, and who is enrolling in the same or another institution of higher education following a break in enrollment of at least one fall or spring semester.

What does this mean for Providers?

Initially healthy children, ages 11-12 should receive the meningococcal vaccine (it is a requirement for the State of Texas, to enter into school, grades 7th-9th), followed by a booster dose at age 16. Provider should stress the importance to parents; to have their children re-vaccinated (given booster dose) between 16 - 18 years of age to reduce the strain on entering college.



A student receives meningococcal vaccine from a Dallas County nurse, Elizabeth Burseson

ACIP Recommendations

MCV4 Vaccine

Changes in MCV4 recommendations include a booster dose for healthy children 11-18 years of age, five years after the first dose.

Children 11-18 years of age, with no high risk health conditions:

If vaccinated at age 11-12 years of age, should receive a one-time booster dose at age 16 years old.

If vaccinated at age 13-16 years, should receive a one-time booster at age 16-18 years of age.

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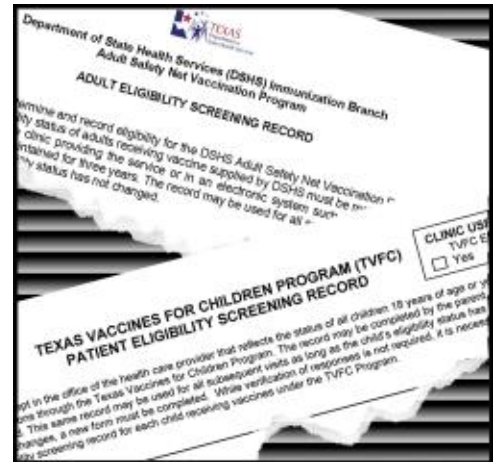
Test Your Knowledge!

1. Children who have private insurance that covers vaccines will no longer be eligible for TVFC vaccines. True or False?
2. If an insured child has a high co-pay, or unmet deductible can they be vaccinated with TVFC vaccines?
3. Individuals 19 and older who begin a vaccine series at age 18 or younger, may only finish that series at _____ that are _____ providers, provided the series is completed prior to their 20th birthday.
4. At what age is a booster dose of MCV4 recommended; if vaccinated at age 11-12 years old?
5. Providers should update their Patient Eligibility Screening Records effective March 1, 2012. True or False?

Bonus Questions:

- * If you arrive at your clinic at 8 am and leave (for the remainder of the day) at 10 am, should you check/record temperatures for both times?
- * Reports should be submitted by the ____th day of each month.

E-mail your answers to Tammara.Scroggins@dallascounty.org by March 5, 2012. Include your provider name and pin number in the email. The winner will be announced at the next Quarterly Update, May 2012.



It is a federal requirement that providers document the eligibility of each client receiving TVFC vaccines. Patient eligibility must be verified each time prior to vaccine administration.

(Parts or full contents used within the newsletter were extracted from the publications of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Texas Department of State Health Services website.)

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VFC Information and Resources

Update your patient Eligibility Screening Forms at:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/toolkit/kit1.shtml>
(TVFC Patient Eligibility Screening Forms)

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/tvfc/default.shtml>
(Adult Safety Net Provider Patient Eligibility Screening Forms)
For ASN Providers only

Vaccine Information Statements Updates!

Updated Hep B VIS (Feb. 2012)
Updated Td/Tdap VIS (Jan. 2012)
Updated IPV VIS (Nov. 2011)



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