June 13, 2019

TO: California Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program Providers
FROM: Sarah Royce, MD, MPH
SUBJECT: New School Immunization Requirements Reminder

Background
California school immunization entry requirements change effective July 1, 2019. This communication summarizes information related to the new requirements, medical exemptions, and tips your practice can take to prepare.

New School Immunization Requirements
Under the California School Immunization Law (California Health and Safety Code, Sections 120325-120375), to protect the public’s health, children are required to receive certain recommended childhood immunizations in order to attend public and private elementary and secondary schools. Note, although not all recommended immunizations are required for school, VFC providers are required to offer all age-appropriate vaccines—including flu—to the populations they serve.

Effective July 1, 2019, changes in the school immunization law include:
- Requiring 2 (rather than 1) doses of chickenpox (varicella) vaccine at
  - Kindergarten entry
  - 7th grade advancement
  - K-12 admission or transfer
- Requiring 2 Measles, Mumps, & Rubella (MMR) doses and 3 Hepatitis B vaccine doses at admission or transfer more uniformly throughout K-12

This table displays the immunization dose requirements for schools:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF DOSES REQUIRED OF EACH IMMUNIZATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-12 Admission</td>
<td>4 Polio 5 DTaP 3 Hep B 2 MMR 2 Varicella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7th-12th)</td>
<td>1 Tdap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th Grade Advancement</td>
<td>1 Tdap 2 Varicella</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Medical Exemptions
Effective July 1, 2019, medical exemptions must be signed by a California-licensed MD or DO and include:

- The specific nature of the physical condition or medical circumstance of the child for which the licensed physician does not recommend immunization.
- Each specific required vaccine that is being exempted.
- Whether the medical exemption is permanent or temporary.
- If the exemption is temporary, an expiration date no more than 12 calendar months from the date of signing.

CDPH has not issued a standardized medical exemption form.

Prepare your Practice
Act now to ensure your patients are protected and are ready for school entry next fall by taking the following steps:

- Give other recommended immunizations: Tdap, meningococcal conjugate, HPV, influenza, and any catch-up doses of MMR and hepatitis B.
- Make reminder and recall phone calls and send notices to patients who have not yet received two doses of chickenpox vaccine, or who are missing other required vaccines.
- Provide your patients clear and accurate documentation of varicella immunization. If you use the California Immunization Registry, consider printing out a copy of the ‘Blue Card’ after chickenpox vaccine has been given for the student to take to school.
- Post electronic banners on your practice’s website to help notify your patients.
- Never miss an opportunity to immunize your patients, including sports physicals and visits for mild illness or injury.

Prepare your Vaccine Supply
Consider the following as you prepare your clinic’s upcoming vaccine request:

- Order enough varicella vaccine, and other adolescent catch-up vaccines to immunize your age-eligible patients.
- Place your order with enough time to allow VFC to review and approve your order, for vaccines to ship.
- Varicella vaccines usually take up to 15 business days to arrive once your order is approved. Urgent or rushed orders cannot be done for this product.
- Before ordering vaccines, ensure you have adequate storage for your orders.

Resources
Guide to Immunizations Required for School Entry (IMM-231)
Vaccine Catch-Up for School Kids Age 7+ (IMM-1265)
California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Division 1, Chapter 4
Automated Phone Script (Provider to Patients)
Visit ShotsForSchool.org for more information and resources on school entry requirements.