

## OIG VACCINE MANAGEMENT REPORT: TALKING POINTS for Providers

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### Overarching Key Messages

- The OIG report highlighted that there are some areas where providers can do better in the VFC program.
- The California VFC program is actively working in partnership with VFC providers to ensure proper vaccine management oversight.
- Vaccines continue to be safe and offer the best protection against vaccine-preventable diseases.

### OIG Report

- The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) conducted a routine, planned assessment of the Vaccines for Children Program (VFC).
- The OIG study was aimed at assessing if VFC providers are meeting their vaccine management requirements, such as storing vaccine at proper temperature ranges and monitoring expiration dates.
- The report underscores that we must do better at ensuring that vaccines are stored and monitored properly -- and that VFC program requirements are being met.
- The complete report can be accessed on the OIG website:  
<http://oig.hhs.gov/oei/reports/oei-04-10-00430.asp>

### For Parents/Patients

Vaccines continue to be safe and offer the best protection against vaccine-preventable diseases.

We understand that parents who hear about this report may have questions about their child's vaccinations. We want you to know:

- The main concern with improper storage temperatures is that they can make vaccines less effective rather than less safe.
- In most of the instances, temperatures were only slightly higher or lower than the recommended range and do not lessen the potency of affected vaccines (according to manufacturer data and WHO vaccine stability data). Children do not need to be revaccinated.
- There is every indication that vaccines are doing their job at providing protection against disease.
- The CDC monitors the diseases that vaccines prevent and can see that vaccines are doing their job; we see little vaccine-preventable disease in the U.S.
- Recent outbreaks of measles and pertussis are not linked to less effective or ineffective vaccines

- Cases of measles reported in the United States appear to be associated with unimmunized people and travel, not vaccine storage outside of recommended temperature ranges. Likewise, the primary factor in pertussis outbreaks seen in the U.S. appears to be waning immunity.
- Our provider office will continue to review and ensure proper vaccine management practices to make sure that our vaccines are as effective as possible.
- If parents have any concerns about immunizations, encourage them to talk with their doctor.

### **Vaccine Safety**

- The findings do not raise concerns about the safety of vaccines administered to children.
- The primary focus of the Inspector General's report was on documentation/oversight issues and proper temperature storage for vaccines.
- Without vaccines, children are at risk for getting seriously ill and suffering pain, disability, and even death from diseases like measles and whooping cough.

### **What Providers are doing**

Ensuring the proper storage, handling, and oversight of vaccines is a priority for California VFC providers.

- VFC Providers will continue to work with the California VFC Program and other partners to ensure compliance with proper vaccine management.
- The California VFC Program has developed a number of trainings and educational tools to help provider offices with their storage, handling, and oversight of their vaccines. Providers are encouraged to take advantage of these resources.