



Immunization Branch, California Department of Public Health, 850 Marina Bay Parkway, Building P, Richmond, CA (510) 620-3737

To: Health Officers
Immunization Program Coordinators
Communicable Disease Control Officers
California Immunization Coalition members
Other interested health care professionals

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California Responds to Novel H1N1 Virus

The arrival of the novel H1N1 influenza “swine flu” outbreak in late April prompted a rapid, intensive, and strategic response from California Department of Public Health (CDPH), including the Immunization Branch. Staff at CDPH and in local health departments worked long hours to reduce the impact of the outbreak and to keep the public informed.

In a message from CDPH Director Dr Mark Horton to CDPH staff, he extended his *“appreciation to staff across the department who continue to work tirelessly to respond to this outbreak.”*

The most current information on the H1N1 influenza outbreak is www.cdph.ca.gov. The CDPH website includes the latest guidance, a map showing cases in California, Twitter messages from Dr. Horton, and more.

Epidemiologic and laboratory influenza surveillance will continue throughout the summer and beyond. The Immunization Branch will keep providers and the public informed about whether a swine flu vaccine will become available. In the meantime, seasonal influenza immunization will proceed for the 2008-09 “flu season” beginning this fall.



Staff Updates

The Immunization Branch announces a new section reorganization and several staff updates since the last issue. An overview of the new section structure is below.

- **Clinical and Policy Support** (formerly Technical Assistance)
- **Influenza Preparedness and Response** (formerly *Bioterrorism Preparedness*)
- **Information and Education**
- **Registry and Assessment** **NEW!**
- **Vaccine Management and Field Services** (formerly *Field Services*)
- **Vaccine Preventable Disease Epidemiology and Control** (formerly *SIRE*)

Juliet Rafol joined the Branch as the new Assistant Branch Chief. Juliet served previously as Section Chief for the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch (CLPPB) and Assistant Branch Chief of the Microbial Diseases Laboratory Branch (MDL). Juliet also worked for 13 years with the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) in the California Environmental Protection Agency.

Steve Nickell, PhD, formerly the Branch's Research Coordinator, is now the Acting Chief for the new Registry and Assessment Section. Steve has been with the Branch since 2006, working with the VFC Program. Previously, he served as Coordinator of the California Adult Hepatitis Vaccine Project. An immunologist by training, Steve ran an NIH-funded academic research program at Johns Hopkins and the University of New Mexico for 13 years before becoming head of the Immunization Program for the State of New Mexico in 2002. He received his BA degree in Microbiology from the University of California, Berkeley and his PhD in Infectious Disease Epidemiology from Johns Hopkins University.

Harvey Kayman, MD, MPH, is the new Acting Chief of the Influenza Preparedness and Response Section. Dr. Kayman has many years of experience in public health positions in California and South Carolina. He has also served as a pediatrician in the US Army and for Kaiser Permanente. He was educated at Cornell University, the University of Chicago, and UC Berkeley, where he serves on the faculty of the School of Public Health.

Laurie Hauer, RN, MPA, joins the Branch after working with communicable diseases in hospital and public health settings. Most recently, Laurie worked at Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency where she co-managed federal, state, and locally funded programs to improve and expand outpatient HIV care. Laurie will assist the Influenza Preparedness section in developing infection control guidances for hospitals, local health departments, and other congregate living settings.

Julie Hamilton is a new Health Program specialist with the Influenza Preparedness Section. Julie has 17 years' experience in emergency medicine, fire service, and disaster response and was a unit leader in the Hurricane Katrina response team in New Orleans. Her last position was Quality Improvement and Data Coordinator for the Emergency Medical Services Authority in Sacramento. She is a trained paramedic.

Leona O'Neill, formerly a Branch Staff Services Manager I, has been promoted to supervisor in the Operation Support Unit. Her new role is to oversee the day-to-day administrative operations in the Branch and coordinate the functions of office staff and contract analysts. She will manage and coordinate the local assistance contracts including personal services contracts and interagency agreements.

AJ Ramsey joins the Branch as VFC Rep for Northern California. AJ worked previously as Immunization Coordinator at CommuniCare, directing immunization services at three clinics. He also assessed and provided immunizations, and conducted outreach to Yolo County migrant workers. **Christina Sadorra**, formerly a VFC Rep in the Bay Area, has moved into the Junior Field Rep position in the Bay Area. **Seless Barnes** has moved from the Northern California VFC Rep position to the Bay Area. **Augustine Yoo** from the Richmond office filled a second Bay Area VFC Rep position.

Statewide Immunization Campaigns

Preteen 2009 Video Contest

As a strategy to reach youth, the Immunization Branch created a video contest for preteens ages 8 to 12. The contest encourages entrants to create a video about topics during the preteen doctor visit, including immunizations, eating right, and staying safe. Videos will be judged on creativity and accuracy of health content. The lucky winner will receive a \$500 gift card to Apple. The contest has been promoted to California schools and online. California Immunization Coalition (CIC) members and Immunization Coordinators distributed flyers at their children's schools, faith based organizations, and other community gatherings. Entries will be accepted until **May 30**, 2009. For more details about the contest, visit www.mybestshot.org.



whyichoose.org Photo Contest

The **i choose** campaign recently sponsored an **i choose** photo contest. Entrants were asked to submit a photo (group shot or solo) and find a creative way to incorporate the letter "i" into their picture. All photos submitted through www.whyichoose.org are now featured in the **i choose** "gallery." Entries are to be judged on photo originality and a personal immunization statement explaining why immunizations are important to them, their friends or family. The 1st prize winner will receive a \$100 gift card, 2nd place a \$50.00 gift card and 3rd place \$25 gift card. The contest was promoted on social networking sites including Facebook and MySpace. Winning entries will be announced soon. To see winners and all submissions, visit www.whyichoose.org or email info@whyichoose.org.



Vaccines

February 2009 ACIP Meeting Highlights

- **Hepatitis A Vaccine for Household Contacts of International Adoptees**
Because of hepatitis A outbreaks in families who had recently adopted children from endemic countries, ACIP now recommends the hepatitis A vaccine for household contacts of international adoptees. Hepatitis A vaccine should be administered prior to arrival of the adopted child or travel to adoptee country. More information is at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/acip/default.htm.

- **Influenza Vaccine**
For the 2009-10 season influenza vaccine is recommended for all children 6 months through 18 years of age, removing the qualification “if feasible” from the recommendation for children 5 through 18 years of age. Offices should plan for yearly influenza vaccination of all children 6 months and older.
- **Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine**
A new 13-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13) may be licensed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) during the latter half of 2009. The Branch will inform VFC providers as soon as information becomes available.
- **Adolescent Vaccines**
A bivalent HPV vaccine and a second meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) are under review by the FDA.
- **Hib Vaccine Shortage**
The shortage of Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) vaccine will persist in 2009. All clinicians and local health departments should carefully read the [CDC’s most recent information on Hib disease](#).

Assessments

2008 LHD and CHC Immunization Coverage Assessment Results

The 2008 statewide public clinic assessment included 135 local health department (LHD) clinics and 236 community health centers (CHCs). This was the first year that the birth cohort matched a calendar year; i.e., children born between 1/1/2005 and 12/31/2005. To measure the immunization status of children served by these clinics, local staff collected immunization records from all two-year-olds attending the clinics (n = 43,409) and entered them into the Comprehensive Clinic Assessment Software Application (CoCASA).

Similar to recent years, statewide coverage levels for the 4:3:1:3:3:1 series were 66.3% ($\pm 0.71\%$) in health department clinics and 75.3% ($\pm 0.52\%$) in CHCs. [\(Table 1\) CHC coverage levels](#) are similar to the National Immunization Survey (NIS) estimate of 78.6 \pm 3.9 during the period of 3/2007-2/2008. As LHD clinics provide “safety net” immunizations to patients who receive immunizations from multiple providers, coverage levels at LHD clinics tend to be lower than at CHCs, which offer continuity of care.

[Coverage levels by local health jurisdiction](#), as well as individual health department and CHC clinic results listed in ranking order, are available online. For additional information, contact Betty.Tran@cdph.ca.gov.

Kindergarten Selective Review and PBE Survey Forms Due

The Branch extends thanks to all Immunization Coordinators and their staff for their hard work on the 2009 Kindergarten Selective Review (KSR) and Personal Beliefs Exemption (PBE) Survey. Completed forms (blue for the KSR and green for PBE Review) along with copies of the California School Immunization Record (Blue Card, PM-286) were due to the Branch May 1. Late submissions should be

mailed ASAP to Jason Stubbs at the Immunization Branch, 850 Marina Bay Parkway, Richmond, CA 94804. For questions, contact Teresa.Lee2@cdph.ca.gov or Madina.Sharifi@cdph.ca.gov.

Child Care and Kindergarten Assessments Begin

In April, the Immunization Branch began emailing *child care lists* to Immunization Coordinators. These lists are to be used for the upcoming fall 2009 assessments mailing and should be retained by IZ Coordinators as a reference. During May, the Branch is emailing *kindergarten lists* to Immunization Coordinators to review for accuracy. Updates to the lists are due back to the Branch by June 15.

Provider Education

Storage and Handling Lessons Ready for Pilot Testing

Pilot versions of two new interactive EZ-IZ lessons, *Storing Vaccines* and *Monitoring Vaccine Temperatures*, previewed May 13 and 14 at the 2009 Immunization Coordinators' Meeting. IZ Coordinators, VFC field staff, IZ Branch staff, and other attendees had the opportunity to "test drive" the lessons and give feedback to the EZ-IZ development team.



The primary target audience for the two storage and handling lessons is medical assistants in California VFC provider practices. However, anyone responsible for the storage or handling of vaccines needs the skills and knowledge provided in the training.

Key content in *Storing Vaccines* includes:

- Types of vaccine storage units
- How to set up refrigerators and freezers for vaccine storage
- How to safeguard the power supply.

Key content in *Monitoring Vaccine Temperatures* includes:

- Types of vaccine thermometers
- How to read thermometers
- Acceptable temperature ranges
- How to complete temperature logs
- Vaccine storage emergency plans

The Branch development team will be evaluating the new lessons in the coming weeks. The two lessons are scheduled to launch this summer. Their release is targeted to coincide with the new storage and handling guidelines for VFC providers. The lessons will be available on www.eziz.org and are part of the expanding curriculum for VFC providers, which currently includes *Preparing Vaccines* and *Administering Vaccines*.

New Immunization Techniques Video Coming Soon

The Immunization Branch is updating their award-winning *Immunization Techniques* training video. Segments will be integrated into the interactive learning modules on EZIZ.org and will also be available as a stand-alone DVD. CDPH produced the original video in the 1990s and updated it in 2001. Since the last update, vaccine recommendations, products, and routes of administration have changed. The revised and updated training will meet health care staff and Medical Assistant trainers' demand for the latest information. In addition to demonstrating correct techniques, the new program highlights the importance of immunizations across the lifespan, patient observation following immunizations, and correct storage and handling. Look for the release in early summer 2009.

CIC Summit Features Campaign, Expert Speakers

The California Immunization Coalition (CIC) used their April 20-21 Summit, *Strengthening Trust in Vaccines*, in Pasadena to launch the "i choose" campaign. The campaign

www.whyichoose.org features real people's stories to promote immunizations and uses a variety of innovative media including public ad space, social media websites, and community magazines. Summit participants expressed enthusiasm for the new campaign. Dozens of people posed for photos and gave testimonials for the campaign website.



Over 200 Summit participants also had the opportunity to hear esteemed immunization experts Dr. Paul Offit, Dr. Litjen Tan, and communication specialists Dr. Lawrence Wallack and Lars Ullberg. Speakers emphasized the important role coalition members can play in strengthening the public's trust in immunizations. Presenters and panelists encouraged attendees to respond quickly to immunization misperceptions and falsehoods presented in the media. View [local media coverage](#) or find Summit highlights and presentations online at www.immunizeCa.org.

Virtual Town Hall Webcast Archived for On-Demand Viewing

The California Department of Public Health, Immunization Branch debuted the virtual town hall webcast, *Vaccines: Wading through the Confusion*, on February 19, 2009. Over 600 participants from around the US viewed program live. Participants engaged in various interactive features, including a live question-and answer session, chat rooms, and a blog. Now, individuals who were unable to view the webcast when it first aired can see an archived version on-demand.



While the public's confidence in vaccines has been tested in recent years, science has consistently shown that vaccines to be a safe and effective way to prevent diseases and protect the public health. One great challenge health care providers face is communicating the science and facts to the public in a way that is empathetic, understandable, and personal. This webcast provides a candid discussion about parents' questions and fears about vaccines, featuring a panel of medical, scientific, public health, and communications professionals. The panel also includes parents whose lives have been touched by vaccine-preventable disease or by autism, and a parent seeking reliable information to help keep her child safe and healthy. To view the program, visit www.whyichoose.org/webcasts/video.html.

New Educational Materials and Online Resources

Resource	Type of resource	Information source
VFC Vaccine Storage and Handling Guidelines	VFC letter	CDPH Immunization Branch
Refrigerator Buying Guide	factsheet	CDPH Immunization Branch
CAIR Benefits VFC providers	flyer	CDPH Immunization Branch
Virtual Town Hall Webcast	60-min webcast	CDPH Immunization Branch www.brochure2blog.org/PublicHealthCafe/home.aspx
Vaccine Safety: 10 Facts for Parents (in Spanish)	factsheet	California Immunization Coalition
Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine Preventable Diseases (The Pink Book) 11 th edition	guidebook	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Call (877) 252-1200 toll-free to order
National Immunizations Survey (updated March 2009)	tables and statistics	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Hib disease fact sheet from CDC	factsheet	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
One in Four Adolescent Girls has had HPV	report	UCLA Center for Health Policy Research
Adolescent Vaccine Recommendations		American Journal of Preventive Medicine http://download.journals.elsevierhealth.com/pdfs/journals/0749-3797/PIIS0749379708009537.pdf
Hot Shots: Vaccines Under the Gun	series of articles	Stanford Medicine, Spring 2009
Percentage of children immunized in California schools	interactive Map	State Health Facts.org. Kaiser Family Foundation www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemactable.jsp?ind=54&cat=2
Sound Advice Autism Interviews	audio interviews with pediatricians	American Academy of Pediatrics