

**PLEASE COPY THIS FOR ALL HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS  
IN YOUR PRACTICE**

**TO:** All Users of State Supplied Vaccines

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**DATE:** September 5, 2006

**SUBJECT:** Pediatric Influenza Vaccine now Available

The primary purpose of this communication is to notify you of the availability of pediatric influenza vaccine for your **VFC-eligible population**.

**Pediatric Influenza Vaccine**

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has expanded their recommendation to include healthy children 6-59 months of age to be vaccinated against influenza. The ACIP also encourages older siblings of 6-59 month olds, as well as out of home caregivers to be vaccinated. The principal reason for immunizing young children and their household contacts is the relatively high morbidity experienced by these children, as demonstrated by their high rates of hospitalization each year. The full 2006 Prevention & Control of Influenza Recommendations can be found at:

[http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5510a1.htm?s\\_cid=rr5510a1\\_e](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5510a1.htm?s_cid=rr5510a1_e)

**Beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> the Immunization Program is making available pediatric influenza vaccine to immunize all VFC-eligible children 6-59 months of age and their household contacts 5-18 years of age, as well as any VFC-eligible child 5-18 years of age who has risk factors for influenza disease or are household contacts of people with risk factors for contracting influenza.** As a reminder, VFC eligibility is defined as follows:

- Medicaid enrolled
- No health insurance
- American Indian or Alaskan Native

In addition, those individuals who are underinsured (have health insurance that does not cover the cost of immunizations) can be referred to a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) to be immunized with VFC-supplied vaccine.

Beginning on October 1<sup>st</sup>, you can order pediatric influenza vaccine for your VFC-eligible population. Please see the chart on page 2 for the proper dosing by patient age. As a reminder, two doses of influenza vaccine administered one month apart are recommended for children less than 9 years of age who are receiving the vaccine for the first time. We will be supplying several different products during the course of the flu season:

| Manufacturer   | Vaccine  | Formulation           | Thimerosal | Age Indication     |
|----------------|----------|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Sanofi Pasteur | Fluzone  | .25 ml syringe        | None       | 6-35 months        |
|                | Fluzone  | .5 ml syringe or vial | None       | 3 years and older  |
|                | Fluzone  | Multi-dose vial       | Yes        | 6 months and older |
| Novartis       | Fluvirin | Multi-dose vial       | Yes        | 4 years and older  |

**We will do our best to fill your orders as completely as possible but you may not receive all the doses you requested. Thus, continue to order flu vaccine on a monthly basis. No backorders will be filled.** Our hope is to supply you with preservative free vaccine but you may receive some thimerosal-containing product based on the inventory we receive from the manufacturers. Please be sure to check which product you receive before administering the vaccine. *Of importance to keep in mind, there is the potential for a shortage of the thimerosal free vaccine formulation to immunize the three and four year old populations this year. The expanded recommendations to immunize these cohorts were made after the manufacturers started their vaccine production. In case of limited supplies of this formulation, efforts should focused on immunizing 6-23 month olds and those 24-59 month olds with high risks of complications from influenza disease.*

As always, if you have any questions please call the State Immunization Program at (860) 509-7929.

| Age Group         | Dosage  | No. of Doses | Route |
|-------------------|---------|--------------|-------|
| 6-35 months       | 0.25 mL | 1 or 2*      | IM    |
| 3-8 years         | 0.50 mL | 1 or 2*      | IM    |
| 9 years and older | 0.50 mL | 1            | IM    |

\* 2 doses administered at least 1 month apart are recommended for children younger than 9 who are receiving influenza vaccine for the first time.