



June 3, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Vaccine for Children Providers
From: Sheila Lovett, Georgia Vaccine Manager
SUBJECT: Georgia Vaccines For Children Program: Vaccine Brand Choice Implementation

Georgia Vaccines for Children Program (VFC) will transition to a provider vaccine choice system for providers that receive public vaccine(s) (VFC or other state supplied vaccines). Transition to this new system will begin July 15, 2011, and will allow providers to select brand and presentation of vaccines.

Over the next few months, Georgia VFC will begin to introduce programmatic changes and/or tools that will help to transition providers to vaccine choice. Updates and revisions will be made to all vaccine reporting and accountability documents, as well as our GRITS registry. Georgia VFC staff will be available to provide technical assistance during this transition period.

The following information outlines: choice system; provider requirements; procedural changes; and provider resources.

Vaccine Brand Choice

Georgia VFC will allow all active VFC enrolled providers (public and private) to select any licensed vaccine and associated presentation that is:

- Recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and
- Available through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Choice of products does not apply in the event of a disaster or public health emergency, terrorist attack, hostile military or paramilitary action, or extraordinary law enforcement emergency. Also, since manufacturing and distribution systems for influenza vaccine established by vaccine manufacturers and CDC are unique and require significant planning to avoid delays, Georgia VFC may limit brand choice for influenza vaccine.

If a brand chosen by the provider is not available and an antigen equivalent vaccine is available, the equivalent brand may be shipped without notification. Georgia VFC will make every attempt to honor provider choice whenever possible.

WHAT WILL CHANGE FOR PROVIDERS

Monthly Comprehensive Report

Georgia VFC is revising the current "Monthly Comprehensive Report" (the form used to report doses administered, inventory, vaccine wastage/loss, and other information related to ordering and accountability) to

Division of Public Health

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include all available vaccine brand choices and presentations (vials/syringes). This form will be in both a paper and electronic version. Providers will be able to submit monthly reports via fax or email.

Provider Inventory Transition Plan

Providers wishing to select a vaccine brand/presentation that differs from what is currently being provided by the Georgia VFC program will need to work with VFC staff to develop a transition plan. The purpose of this transition plan will allow providers to spend down current inventory supply that will no longer be used by this practice (preventing vaccine loss/wastage of this vaccine); complete vaccine series for patients who may have began the series using a current brand, and start new series using vaccine brands chosen by the provider.

WHAT ASSISTANCE WILL BE PROVIDED

Communication

As additional information on the transition to choice becomes available in the following weeks, further communication will be forthcoming. Providers will be notified via one or more of the following methods: blast fax, email, GRITS, and/or USPS mailing.

Training

Over the next few months VFC staff will develop and schedule provider choice training session(s) on the vaccine ordering, reporting, and other processes changes. Additional information regarding training will be provided as it becomes available.

Website

As information, tools, and training are developed and distributed, they will be added to the DCH-VFC website at: <http://health.state.ga.us/programs/immunization/vfc> under "Vaccine Choice". Providers should visit this site to access the most current choice information and resources.

We appreciate your support in this choice transition effort, and are committed to making it as simple as possible. Future communications will be forthcoming as additional information becomes available.