Maine Immunization Program

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To: Maine Immunization Providers

From: Maine Immunization Program

Subject: Unannounced Storage and Handling Site Visits

Date: March 29, 2013

Over the past several months, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has made several changes to the vaccine storage, handling and accountability policies for the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. Based on these changes, the Maine Immunization Program (MIP) is now required to conduct Unannounced Storage and Handling Site Visits. The primary goal of these visits is to provide guidance and education and to ensure that all VFC eligible children are receiving properly managed vaccines.

MIP providers may be chosen for an Unannounced Storage and Handling Site Visit at any time during the calendar year based on any one of the following criteria:

* Any loss of publicly purchased vaccine
* Storing publicly purchased vaccine incorrectly
* Not correctly documenting temperature logs every month as required
* Non-complaint for any questions on the VFC site visit questionnaire
* Not reconciling publicly purchased vaccine every month as required
* Failing to meet any of the current requirements of the Maine Immunization Program Provider Agreement.

These visits will take approximately 30 – 45 minutes to conduct. If your site is chosen for an Unannounced Storage and Handling Site Visit, MIP staff must be allowed access to your vaccine storage and handling units. Additionally, vaccine management staff must be available to answer any questions MIP staff may have during this time. MIP understands that provider offices are extremely busy and we apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. However, these visits will help provide us with information to assist in creating targeted education throughout the State of Maine and the opportunity to assist providers in complying with storage and handling requirements.

Thank you for your dedication to keep the citizens of Maine free from vaccine-preventable diseases.

If you have any questions, please contact Celeste Poulin, Health Program Manager at (207) 287-3746 or (800) 867-4775.

Sincerely,



Tonya Philbrick, BS, NCMA

Director, Maine Immunization Program