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Maine Immunization Program
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To: Maine Immunization Providers
From: Maine Immunization Program
Subject: NEW Maine School Immunization Requirements
Date: January 25, 2017

On December 20th, 2016 the Maine Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Education revised the Maine School Immunization Requirements rule. The changes further align Maine's immunization rules with current national recommendations to better protect the health of all Maine people. The following two changes were made:

1. Effective immediately, the exclusion period for varicella disease (chickenpox) has increased from 16 days to **21 days**. This means that if a case of chickenpox is confirmed in your school and exclusions are recommended, any child who has not provided proof of immunization or history of disease will be unable to attend school or any school related activity for 21 days after symptom onset of the LAST case.
2. Effective for the 2017-2018 school year, all students entering, advancing, or transferring into seventh grade will need to receive one dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) vaccine before attendance is allowed. This requirement is for seventh grade students only; grades 8-12 are not included in this rule change.

You can find a link to the rule (Chapter 126 / 261) here:
<http://www.maine.gov/doe/rule/changes/index.html>

Late spring and summer checkups/physicals for sports and summer camps are a perfect opportunity to catch up preteens and teenagers with routinely recommended vaccines. In addition to the Tdap booster, the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommend that adolescents receive vaccines to protect against both meningococcal (MCV4) and the human papillomavirus (HPV).

Please read the attached Frequently Asked Questions for more information.

If you have any questions, please contact the Maine Immunization Program at (207) 287-3746 or (800) 867-4775 or by email at ImmunizeME.DHHS@maine.gov.

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