

THE AVAILABILITY OF SEASONAL INFLUENZA VACCINES FOR MEDICAID CHILDREN

Due to the continued public health issues related to influenza and the calls being received by the Department of Health and Hospitals and the Medicaid Program regarding the availability of seasonal influenza vaccines for Medicaid children, the following policy is being republished to ensure that all providers have access to it.

This policy information is from the 2004 and 2007 KIDMED Provider Training Packets.

- **For children that are determined by their PCP/provider to be high priority or high risk children** (2007 KIDMED Provider Training Packet, page 41):

"In the event a Medicaid provider does not have VFC pediatric influenza vaccine on hand to vaccinate a high priority VFC eligible Medicaid enrolled child, the provider should use pediatric influenza vaccine from private stock, if available. If a provider does use vaccine from private stock for a high priority VFC eligible Medicaid enrolled child, the provider would then replace dose(s) used from private stock with replacement dose(s) from VFC stock when VFC vaccine becomes available. The provider should not turn away, refer or reschedule a high priority VFC eligible Medicaid enrolled child for a later date if vaccine is available. Louisiana Medicaid will update Medicaid enrolled providers through Remittance Advices and Provider Updates regarding availability of vaccine through the VFC program and any billing issues. Please contact the Louisiana VFC Program Office at (504)838-5300 for vaccine availability information."

Providers should maintain documentation of any doses 'borrowed' from privately purchased vaccine stock for replacement when VFC influenza vaccines are received. If providers choose to submit claims to Louisiana Medicaid for influenza immunizations that utilized 'borrowed privately purchased vaccine stock', existing immunization policy for children/adolescents from birth through 18 years of age must be followed. If providers choose to, they may hold influenza immunization claims for this situation until their VFC influenza vaccine stock arrives and any 'borrowed privately purchased' vaccine is replaced with VFC vaccine.

- **For children that are determined by their PCP/provider to be non-high priority or high risk** (2004 KIDMED Provider Training Packet, page 29):

"If the flu vaccine is not available through the VFC program and Medicaid providers choose to use flu vaccine obtained elsewhere for Medicaid recipients, the ADMINISTRATION is reimbursable by Medicaid. If the provider intends to charge the recipient for the vaccine, the following must occur: PRIOR to the injection, providers MUST INFORM recipients that when the actual vaccine does not come from the VFC, the recipient can be responsible for the cost of the vaccine."

Providers/recipients can contact the Office of Public Health (OPH)-Immunization Program for information on the availability of the Vaccines for Children (VFC) flu vaccine for Medicaid enrolled children under the age of 19 years at (504) 838-5300. VFC flu vaccine may be available at the OPH local Health Units.