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Vaccines for Children and Louisiana Immunization Network for Kids**Vaccines for Children**

Section 1928 of the Social Security Act provides for vaccines for children (VFC) to improve vaccine availability nationwide by providing vaccines free of charge to VFC-eligible children through public and private providers.

The goal of VFC is to ensure that no VFC-eligible child contracts a vaccine preventable disease because of his/her parent's inability to pay for the vaccine or its administration.

Persons eligible for VFC are between the ages of birth through 18 years of age and who meet one of the following criteria:

- American Indian or Alaskan native
- Medicaid eligible
- Uninsured
- Underinsured

Underinsured individuals are individuals who have health insurance, but the health insurance does not cover vaccines or has limited vaccine coverage. Underinsured children are eligible to receive vaccines only at federally qualified health centers or rural health clinics.

Providers can obtain a VFC enrollment packet by calling the Office of Public Health's (OPH) Immunization Section. (See Appendix A for contact information)

NOTE: All Medicaid enrolled providers that provide Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) well child preventative screenings must be enrolled in the VFC program and utilize VFC vaccines for recipients aged birth through 18 years of age.

Louisiana Immunization Network for Kids Statewide (LINKS)

Louisiana Immunization Network for Kids Statewide (LINKS) is a computer-based system designed to track immunization records for providers and their patients by:

- Consolidating immunization information among all health care providers,
- Assuring adequate immunization coverage levels, and

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- Avoiding duplicative immunizations.

LINKS can be accessed through the OPH website. (See Appendix A for contact information)

LINKS assists providers by offering:

- Immediate records for new patients,
- Decrease office staff time retrieving immunization records,
- Avoid missed opportunities to administer needed vaccines, and
- Fewer missed appointments (if the “reminder cards and letter” option is used).

LINKS assists patients by offering:

- Easy access to records needed for school and child care,
- Automatic reminders to help children’s immunizations remain on schedule, and
- Reduced cost (and discomfort to child) of unnecessary immunizations.

Providers can obtain a LINKS enrollment packet, or learn more about LINKS by calling the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, OPH Immunization Program. (See Appendix A for contact information)