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To: Health Officers
Immunization Program Coordinators
Communicable Disease Control Officers
California Immunization Coalition Members
Other interested health care professionals

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Measles Health Alert 2008

Measles Outbreaks in Other Countries a Threat to the U.S.

Although indigenous transmission of measles in the United States has been eliminated, an upsurge in measles cases associated with importations from other countries has recently occurred. From January 1 to April 25, 2008, 64 confirmed measles cases were reported in the United States, the highest number in a comparable period since 2001. Cases were reported in New York City (22 cases), Arizona (15), California (13, including one case diagnosed in Hawaii), Michigan and Wisconsin (4 each), Hawaii (2), and Illinois, New York state, Pennsylvania, and Virginia (1 each). Of the 64 cases, 54 (84%) were associated with importation of measles from other countries (Switzerland, Israel, Belgium, India, and Italy), and 63 of the 64 patients were unvaccinated or had unknown or undocumented vaccination status. For more information, please see: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm57e501a1.htm>

Twelve of the California cases cited in the MMWR were associated with the San Diego measles outbreak (index case exposed in Switzerland) and case 13 occurred in a toddler in Los Angeles County (source unknown). Since the publication of the MMWR, an additional case has been identified in an adult in San Francisco (exposed in India).

Because measles outbreaks are ongoing in parts of the world, we will continue to have imported cases. To increase clinician awareness of measles, a [poster](#) developed by the IZ Branch and a [letter for health care providers](#) from IZ Branch Chief, Dr. Howard Backer will be distributed to hospital emergency departments and other clinical venues across the state. We hope that this will increase early recognition of possible measles cases and limit transmission, if a measles case occurs.

New Branch Staff

Nia Lynette Price joined the Immunization Branch as a VFC Field Representative for the Southern California area. She has a BS in Biology from San Diego State University. Previously Nia worked for Planned Parenthood as a Reproductive Health Assistant and at the University of California as a Hospital Laboratory Technician. The Branch welcomes Nia to her new position!

Ann Roslosnik recently joined the Branch as Administrative Assistant for the Bioterrorism (BT) Section. Ann's has worked previously with community-based organizations and in educational settings. She has a BA in Rhetoric from UC Berkeley and is interested in the possibility of pursuing an MPH

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

Pertussis Outbreak at School in Contra Costa County

In mid-April, an outbreak of pertussis was reported at a private school in Contra Costa County. The school had a very high rate of personal belief exemptions for vaccines (up to 64% in one class). Cases associated with this outbreak reside in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties. To date, there have been 20 cases among students and their family members. The outbreak investigation uncovered additional students who had prolonged cough illness in the months prior to the reporting of the index case. At least three children with laboratory-confirmed pertussis did not receive antibiotics due to parental beliefs about medical treatment. These children were excluded from school until they tested negative by PCR for *B. pertussis*.

On May 9, the school closed for one day to implement an antibiotic policy and halt ongoing disease transmission. All pupils and staff who were uninfected and had not yet received antibiotic prophylaxis were given the option of receiving prophylaxis or exclusion from school for 21 days. About 7% of the students did not receive antibiotics due to parental beliefs and were excluded. There have been no new cases at that school since it instituted the antibiotic policy. The Contra Costa County health department will continue surveillance through the end of the school year.

Hepatitis A Outbreak at Restaurant in San Diego

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency and Department of Environmental Health investigated a hepatitis A virus (HAV) outbreak that was linked to a Mexican restaurant in La Mesa. A total of 22 confirmed cases, aged 24-59, became ill in April after dining at the restaurant between March 3 and March 16. Four cases were hospitalized; all have since recovered. San Diego County is working with the restaurant to improve food handling practices and to prevent future disease. No other counties in California are experiencing unusual HAV activity.

News Briefs

New Webcast Addresses Vaccine Safety Issues

A new two-part webcast, *"Talking About Vaccine Safety with Parents and Patients,"* is scheduled to debut this month on the Public Health Café portion of www.cdlnh.com. The webcast is sponsored by the California Immunization Coalition and features pediatrician Mark Sawyer, MD of the UC San Diego School of Medicine, who was recently appointed to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). The webcast focuses on issues raised in the popular media and how communities can address them.

Part I addresses why vaccine safety continues to receive so much attention, the impact of media and the Internet, and communication strategies that can help to make immunization messages more effective. Part II explores some of the most common controversies and offers talking points to address them. The webcast identifies information resources appropriate for a variety of audiences, including patients, parents, and providers. This program will serve as a timely tool to help public health advocates and clinicians assist parents in making reasoned and informed choices when deciding to immunize their children.

2007-08 Flu Season Recap and 2008-09 Season Preview

Six manufacturers produced 140 million doses of influenza vaccine for the United States for the 2007-08 influenza season. A record 113 million doses were distributed, 10 million more doses than during the 2006-07 flu season.

In California, 10.9 million doses were shipped during the 2007-08 season. Influenza vaccine distribution in California has increased steadily over the past three years.

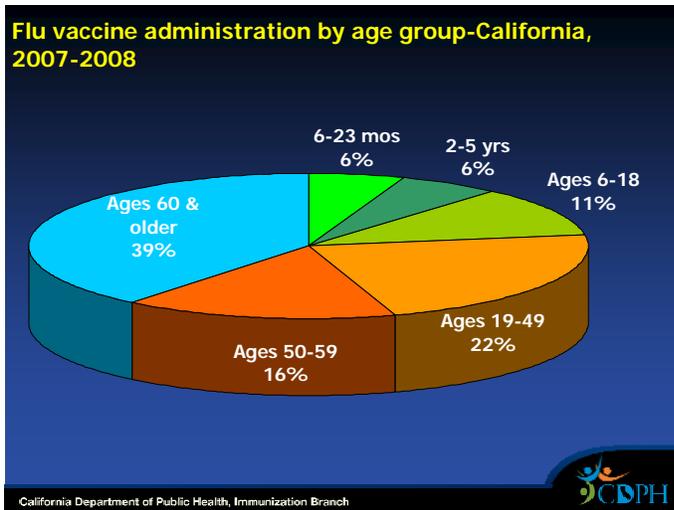
Total number of flu vaccine doses shipped to California
(Includes all doses—public/VFC and private.)

| Season | Number of doses |
|-----------|-----------------|
| 2004-2005 | 5,642,886 |
| 2005-2006 | 10,140,048 |
| 2006-2007 | 10,667,485 |
| 2007-2008 | 10,901,596 |

The availability of vaccine supplies in California followed national patterns. Vaccine was first available in mid-September. Supplies increased sharply through the end of November. Initial supplies of certain formulations, such as doses for children less than three years old and doses of live intranasal vaccine, could not meet demand, increasing the challenge of protecting children against influenza.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) purchased 561,850 doses of influenza vaccine from two manufacturers for the 2007-08 season, including 16,900 doses of preservative-free vaccine, which were prioritized for pregnant women. In addition, 101,500 doses of influenza vaccine for VFC-eligible children and 50,000 doses of live intranasal influenza vaccine (FluMist[®]) were purchased with federal funds. Eighteen counties administered the live vaccine at school-based clinics staffed by the local health department or school nurses.

According to local health departments, 84% of California's publicly-purchased influenza vaccine was administered during the 2007-08 season. However, only 58% of the doses of live vaccine were used. The age distribution of the publicly-purchased doses administered is presented in the Figure below; 39% of vaccine was administered to persons 60 and older.



The federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) is making major changes to the recommendations for influenza vaccination for the 2008-09 season. The ACIP will recommend annual vaccination for all children ages 6 months through 18 years. Annual vaccination of all children age 6 months through 59 months should continue. Annual vaccination of all children ages 5 through 18 years should begin in 2008 for the 2008-

2009 influenza season. Annual vaccination of all children ages 6 months through 18 years should begin no later than the 2009-2010 influenza season. The ACIP realizes that this expansion of immunization will be challenging to implement. All three strains in

the 2008-09 influenza vaccine will be new. They include A/Brisbane/59/2007 (H1N1)-like, A/Brisbane/10/2007 (H3N2)-like, and B/Florida/4/2006-like antigens.

Report on Vaccination at California Chain Pharmacies

The Immunization Branch has recently released a new report, "*Vaccination Delivery by Chain Pharmacies in California: Results of a 2007 Survey*." The report summarizes survey data from eight California-based pharmacy chains on immunization availability, training, practice protocols, and vaccine usage. Data were collected from state-level corporate liaisons for each chain's respective immunization program. Among the key findings are that all eight chains provide immunizations, and more than 1,000 California pharmacists have been trained to vaccinate. Locations were widespread, with over 500 sites statewide. All participating chains immunize adults; four also serve adolescents. None serve children younger than age nine. Sharing information with the patient's medical home and lack of reimbursement mechanisms for privately insured patients were problematic. Chain pharmacy representatives expressed interest in working with public health to build partnerships, improve public awareness, and overcome challenges. The report was prepared in collaboration with Jeffery Goad, Pharm.D., MPH, FCPHA, FCSHP at the University of Southern California, School of Pharmacy. The full report is [available online](#).

2007 LHD and CHC Immunization Coverage Assessment Results

The 2007 statewide public clinic assessment included 126 local health department clinics and 239 community health centers (CHCs). Several important changes were new for 2007; it was the first year that evaluators were required to use the Comprehensive Clinic Assessment Software Application (CoCASA). Also, 2007 marked the year when the 4:3:1:3:3:1 (4 DTP/DTaP/DT, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hib, 3 Hep B, 1 Varicella) series coverage became the primary measure of immunization for the clinic report and evaluation. However, the coverage level for 4:3:1:3:3 (4 DTP/DTaP/DT, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hib, 3 Hep B) series was also collected and will be used indefinitely as a benchmark to allow data from previous years to be compared.

To measure the immunization status of children served by these clinics, local staff collected immunization records from all two-year-olds attending the clinics (n=44,511) and entered them into CoCASA. Statewide coverage levels for the 4:3:1:3:3:1 series were 65.8%, $\pm 0.72\%$ in health department clinics, and 75.8%, $\pm 0.5\%$ in CHCs. Regarding the 4:3:1:3:3 series, statewide coverage levels for both health department clinics (66.7%, $\pm 0.71\%$) and CHCs (76.8%, $\pm 0.5\%$) increased by only 1 percentage point and 3 percentage points respectively since last year's assessments. This table shows statewide assessment results over the past 15 years.

Local Health Department and Community Health Center Clinics

Record Assessment Results – Percentages of Patients Receiving Specified Immunization Series

by Age 24 Months, 1993-2007

| Year | Local Health Department Clinics | | Community Health Center Clinics | |
|------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | 4:3:1:3:3 Series* | 4:3:1:3:3:1 Series ** | 4:3:1:3:3 Series* | 4:3:1:3:3:1 Series ** |
| 2007 | 67% | 66% | 77% | 76% |
| 2006 | 66%† | n/a | 74%† | n/a |
| 2005 | 70% | n/a | 76% | n/a |
| 2004 | 68% | n/a | 73% | n/a |
| 2003 | 65% | n/a | 71% | n/a |
| 2002 | 63% | n/a | 70% | n/a |
| 2001 | 58% | n/a | 68% | n/a |
| 2000 | 54% | n/a | 65% | n/a |
| 1999 | 52% | n/a | 63% | n/a |
| 1998 | 48% | n/a | 62% | n/a |
| 1997 | 47% | n/a | 56% | n/a |
| 1996 | 30% | n/a | 36% | n/a |
| 1995 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 1994 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 1993 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |

* 4 DTP/DTaP/DT, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hib, 3 Hep B

** 4 DTP/DTaP/DT, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hib, 3 Hep B, 1 Varicella

† Due to technical difficulties, Six CHC clinics and 1 LHD were not able to generate coverage data for 4:3:1:3, 4:3:1:3:3. The coverage data for these clinics were not included in the sample for calculating the state coverage levels.

Source: Immunization Branch, LHD and CHC Clinic Assessment, 2007
 Prepared by California Department of Public Health, Immunization Branch

With local health department clinics serving primarily as a “safety net” providing immunization services to patients who are not likely to have a primary care provider, return visits may be not be as assured. Correspondingly coverage levels at these LHD clinics would be lower than at CHCs which are more likely to offer primary care. While the state wide coverage levels for both local health department clinics and CHCs have dropped a few percentage points since last year, CHC coverage levels are within the range of the National Immunization Survey estimate of 4:3:1:3:3 coverage (4 DTP, 3 polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hib, 3 Hep B, 1 Varicella) by 24 months of age among children 19-35

months in California (75.9±3.4) during the period of 3/2006-2/2007. While 4:3:1:3:3:1 coverage is not the sole indicator of clinic performance, awareness of current coverage levels can help providers diagnose problems and improve immunization coverage in their clinics. Supplemental coverage data is available in the following Excel spreadsheet files:

[2007 CHC Clinic](#)

[2007 LHD Clinic](#)

[2007 LHD Counties](#)

For further questions on public clinic assessments, please contact Betty Tran at (510) 620-3760 or by email: Betty.Tran@cdph.ca.gov.

B2B Webcast Reaches Wide Audience

Anyone who saw the recent launch of “*Brochure to Blog: Public Health Communication for a New Age*” has a better grasp of how new technology tools are used in public health. Almost 600 viewers in California watched the 30-minute documentary webcast on May 8. To date, more than 3,000 people around the world have seen it. The B2B website hosted an educational “scavenger hunt” for viewers to navigate through cutting-edge web destinations that illustrate the latest industry best practices. Viewer feedback has been very positive.

Highlights of the program included interviews with CDC personnel and examples of new technology currently in use in Alameda County, in isolated Indian reservation communities, and by a mother who banded with other families to share personal stories about meningococcal meningitis and the importance of protecting children from vaccine-preventable diseases. The webcast and accompanying hands-on skill-building exercise are available online at www.brochure2blog.org. Viewers who have already seen the program are encouraged to share the information with colleagues in any relevant field.

VFC Online Training: Pilot Test Results

The IZ Branch is currently developing online training in immunization skills for medical assistants who work in California VFC provider offices. Beta versions of the first two online lessons, *Preparing Vaccines* and *Administering Vaccines* were pilot tested with five groups—four groups of medical assistants working in Bay Area VFC provider practices and a group of students enrolled in a medical assistant certificate training program. A total of 20 subjects participated in the pilot test of the two lessons.

During the pilot test each participant:

1. Took the pretest
2. Took the online lesson
3. Took the posttest
4. Participated in a focus group discussion about the lesson

Here are some typical comments about the training from pilot participants during the focus group discussions:

- Easy to understand; fun
- Liked that it is so interactive and hands-on; like visual learning
- Has just the right information; not too much information

The piloted lessons are the first in the EZ-IZ curriculum, which will include vaccine storage and handling, vaccine inventory management, patient aftercare, and other immunization-related skills. The planned launch of the first two lessons and the EZ-IZ website is scheduled for the end of this month.

Skateboard Competition Promotes Immunization

In April the Immunization Branch, in partnership with the California Immunization Coalition, sponsored a skateboard design art contest. College students throughout California designed skateboard decks as part of a vaccination awareness campaign targeting UC Berkeley students. The campaign, “Call Your Own Shots: Get Vaccinated!” is scheduled to kick off in August. The goal of the campaign is to encourage college students to get vaccinated against harmful diseases, including meningitis and influenza (flu).

The Immunization Branch received almost 20 contest entries from students throughout the state. Three winners were selected by a panel of judges from the Immunization Branch, UC Berkeley, the City of Berkeley Health Department, and the Vaccines for Children program. View all contest entries and a list of winners at <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Pages/2008CDPHSkateboardDesignArtContest.aspx>

Contest Winners received Apple gift cards—\$500 for first place, \$250 for second place, and \$100 for third place. In addition, all winners will receive a finished skateboard deck with their original design and recognition from the Immunization Branch.

Assessment Update

Child Care Assessments – Summer Mailing. The Immunization Branch will send the child care assessment materials to Immunization Coordinators by July. Local health departments are responsible for the distribution of these materials to child care centers during the month of August.

Kindergarten Web Assessments. This fall, public school districts and private schools will be able to make the immunization status of their kindergarten students available on the Internet. Instructions for web reporting, frequently asked questions, guides, and worksheets will be sent to schools during the month of August.

Recent Events and Campaigns

| Date/ location | Event/campaign | Results | For more info |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| April 19-26 throughout California | National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) | Local coalitions and health departments held a variety of events | www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Pages/NationalInfantImmunizationWeekToddlerImmunizationMonth.aspx |
| April 28-29, Sacramento | California Immunization Summit | Attended by nearly 200 immunization professionals | www.immunizeca.org/page.paccq?id=21&tier=3 |

Upcoming Events, Conferences, and Observances

| Date/ Location | Event, conference or observance | Partners/ sponsors | Website/ contact info |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
| Aug. 2008 | National Immunization Awareness Month | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) | www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/default.htm#niam |
| Sept. 9-12 in Sacramento | ASTHO-NACCHO Annual Conference | Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, and National Association of County and City Health Officials | www.naccho.org/conferences/asthonaccho2008/index.cfm |
| Sept. 21-27 | National Adult Immunization Awareness Week | National Foundation for Infectious Diseases | www.nfid.org |
| Oct. 23-25 in San Diego | SOPHE Annual Meeting | Society for Public Health Education | www.sophe.org/ |
| Oct. 25-29 in San Diego | APHA Annual Meeting | American Public Health Association | www.apha.org/meetings/highlights/ |
| Nov. 17-18 In Concord | Epi. & Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases | Live 2-day course (Pink Book), with CME/CEU Credit available | http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Pages/ImmunizationTrainingandEvents.aspx |
| Nov. 20-21 in Orange County | Epi. & Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases | Live 2-day course (Pink Book), with CME/CEU Credit available | http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Pages/ImmunizationTrainingandEvents.aspx |

Training/Education Print and Online Resources

| Resource | Type of resource/ content | How to obtain/ contact info |
|--|--|--|
| B2B Scavenger Hunt | Hands-on exercise showcasing new web-based technologies | www.brochure2blog.org/index.html |
| Updated CAIR materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions for EMRs • Technical Readiness Assessment forms | www.ca-siis.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=40&Itemid=55#Assessing |
| Presentations from the National Conference on Immunization and Health Coalitions | PowerPoint slides from May 2008 national conference plenary sessions | www.sfimmunize.org/page4.html |
| <i>Misperceptions, Raw Emotions, Potent Strategies: Working with Traditional and New Media to Promote the Facts about Vaccine Safety</i> | Webcast sponsored by the National Immunization Technical Assistance Network | www.izta.org/confcall.cfm?id=86 |
| <i>Understanding Autism</i> | Webcast sponsored by the National Immunization Technical Assistance Network | www.izta.org/confcall.cfm?id=89 |
| <i>Talking About Vaccine Safety with Parents and Patients</i> | Webcast, part of the Public Health Café series. Launch date June 20. | www.cdlnh.com |
| Flu materials for 2008-2009 season | Suite of flu materials includes updated items to reflect ACIP latest flu vaccination recommendations | cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Documents/Flu%20Materials%202008_09.pdf |
| Measles Alert flyer | Flyer suitable for hospital ERs or other clinical settings | www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Documents/IMM-908.pdf |