

**Immunization Branch Update**  
**TISWG**  
**February 16, 2006**

VFC Funding Update—Funding issues are resolved for now. The remaining challenge will be to see if the CDC will have funding in place for new vaccines.

President's Budget—The 2007 budget proposed by the President will cut 317 funds by \$100 million. In Texas, we use these funds for our contracts with local health departments to support and strengthen infrastructure and immunization service delivery. Some of these dollars are also earmarked for underinsured children and adult safety net vaccinations in health departments. President Bush is also requesting that VFC eligibility expand coverage for vaccine coverage for underinsured children in FQHCs and RHCs to also include underinsured children vaccinated in public health departments.

ImmTrac—ImmTrac Provider Working Group (IPWG) will hold its 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Subcommittee of TISWG. Developing an educational plan is the top priority of IPWG. In the first meeting, improvements and enhancements to ImmTrac were also brainstormed and a large part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting will be devoted to prioritizing those enhancements. ImmTrac also routinely holds conference calls with health plans; the focus is primarily data exchange issues. The HL7 solution for the registry is also in motion. HL7 provides a standard file format for exchange of data with any other HL7-compliant registry. The purchases have been made and implementation will occur in the May-July timeframe. ImmTrac and TWICES will participate in a summit hosted by the Austin/Travis County Health Department and the St. David's Foundation. The purpose of the summit is to discuss health data sharing with a focus on registries; the summit will occur in June.

Public Information, Education, and Training—The media campaign in the four largest metropolitan areas of the state ended in December. The four areas were chosen due to their large population and the fact that the National Immunization Survey provides vaccine coverage level data for those areas: Dallas county, Bexar county, City of Houston, and El Paso county. National Infant Immunization Week is April 22-29. The CDC's web address for this event is <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/events/niiw>. The Immunization Branch will provide kits to local and regional health departments. The kits will include public service announcements (from the media campaign) to share with local media outlets. The focus this year will be on preventing pertussis. Information on pertussis disease incidence and an additional public service announcement focused on pertussis will be in the kits. ImmTrac will provide lists of children who are 24 months of age and do not have the 4<sup>th</sup> DTaP. Regional and local health departments will be asked to conduct reminders for these children during the month of April.

Vaccine Services—Notifications for the implementation of new vaccines and new recommendations are currently being developed. TMA and TPS Infectious Disease Committees are assisting with recommendations for meningococcal vaccine

implementation. (Vaccine supply is limited.) Hepatitis A vaccine is now recommended at one year of age. Implementation of Tdap began in January and states will not be held accountable for existing Td vaccine inventories. A survey regarding preference of prefilled syringes versus vials was conducted and customers prefer prefilled syringes. Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine will soon only be available in prefilled syringes. The Branch will consider this survey when future vaccine purchases are made.

#### Other Branch Issues

- Birth dose of hepatitis B vaccine in the birthing centers.
- The Division of Prevention and Preparedness is consolidating contracting services. The Immunization Branch has provided two positions for the new Unit. The new Unit will focus on contract and RFP development processes and provide oversight to programs within the Division for quality assurance. The Immunization Branch will continue to have responsibility over scopes of work and quality assurance monitoring.
- The Branch is developing standards now in anticipation of improving current quality assurance activities.
- Promotion and recruitment providers that serve adolescents remains a priority with more adolescent vaccines on the way.

Interim Legislative Study—The Lt. Governor has requested that a study be conducted to make recommendations for improving vaccination rates and ensure an adequate supply of vaccine in the state. It will include an analysis of vaccine manufacturing and purchasing policies. The study will be concluded by December and recommendations may generate bills during the next session that begins next January.

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