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Vaccinate Before You Graduate

By Laberne Thomas—Assessment, Compliance & Evaluation

Bacterial Meningitis is a dangerous and deadly disease and college students are at a heightened risk of contracting this disease.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends a booster dose of meningitis for adolescents, ages 16-18 years of age, to increase protection. Therefore, high school students are being urged to vaccinate before they graduate.

These reasons and other factors encouraged the Texas 82nd (R), Legislature to pass SB 1107. This Bill requires first-time (including transfer) students at public and private or independent colleges, under the age of 30, to show proof of a recent bacterial meningitis vaccination or booster dose within five years of school entry and 10 days before the first day of class.



For the upcoming 2012 fall semester, THECB estimates that this rule will impact 500,000 students. The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Immunization Branch is working with stakeholders to develop a comprehensive meningococcal plan to inform and educate the state of Texas on this new requirement and offer resources and assistance to students in need of this vaccine.

According to the American College Health Association, approximately 100 to 125 cases of meningococcal disease occur on college campuses each year, and 5 to 15 students will die as a result.

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National Infant Immunization Week 2012

By Markel Rojas—Public Information, Education & Training

From April 21-28, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Immunization Branch observed National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) and Vaccination Week in the Americas (VWA). NIIW-VWA is a joint bi-national annual initiative involving the Republic of Mexico, the United States, and the Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention (CDC), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Texas and other border states and their sister cities along the U.S.-Mexican border, and the United States-Mexico Border Health Commission (USMBHC). Joint U.S./ Mexico inaugural activities for 2012 NIIW-VWA were held in Laredo on April 23.

NIIW is a world-wide immunization campaign launched simultaneously in the United States and in countries and territories in the World Health Organization Regions of the Americas, Eastern Mediterranean, Western Pacific, Africa, and Europe.

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In addition, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 1,000 – 1,200 people get meningococcal disease each year in the U.S. and 10-15% of these people die.

Of those who live, another 11%-19% lose their arms or legs, have problems with their nervous systems, become deaf or mentally retarded, or suffer seizures or strokes.

DSHS is asking everyone who comes into contact with incoming college students or high school seniors who are college bound, to help us educate them on this new requirement.

If you have questions or need additional information, you may also call the Immunization Branch customer service number: (800) 252-9152.

The following are links to reference materials mentioned in the article:

- [Texas HECB Rules for SB 1107](#)
- [Meningitis Disease Info](#)
- [Meningitis Vaccine Information Sheet](#)
- [CollegeVaccineRequirements.com](#)

Changes in TVFC

By Shirley Rocha—Vaccine Services

In June 2010 local health departments (LHD) and regional staff assembled in Austin for the initial training for the Electronic Vaccine Inventory system (EVI). Over the following weeks providers across the state were trained by the LHD and regional staff. Providers began placing their orders online in September of 2010. A Vaccine Call Center was established and soon began fielding calls and assisting providers with issues they encountered. Over the past year, Texas Vaccines for Children providers have become more comfortable with placing their vaccine orders through the EVI system.

Biological Report Update

Biological Report (C-33) is scheduled to go live this spring, enabling providers to enter and manage their vaccine inventory online. The system will pre-populate many cells for the provider, reducing math errors and saving time. We will continue to add functionalities to EVI in the coming months and will communicate these updates to TVFC providers as they become available. The Vaccine Call Center, as well as updated online training will be available for providers as new system features are added.

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School Requirements Update

By Laberne Thomas— Assessment, Compliance & Evaluation

Perhaps, the greatest success story in public health is the reduction of infectious diseases resulting from the use of vaccines; and Texas can be proud for doing its part. However, in order to maintain and increase our success, we must continue to recognize and follow through with our responsibility to our children by keeping them vaccinated and up-to-date on their immunizations against vaccine-preventable diseases.

This year is especially important that we ensure all children meet vaccine requirements for school entry.

Recent fiscal reductions to both state and federal budgets have necessitated changes in policy to the Texas Vaccines for Children (TVFC) program. In the past, any child was allowed to receive vaccines through a public health department clinic; but now if a child has private or commercial insurance which covers vaccines, they will no longer be able to receive vaccines through a public health department clinic. Children will now be directed to their medical home of physician for their vaccinations.

We realize this adjustment may cause an inconvenience. However, preparing for the new school year now will decrease the stress parents and school nurses typically encounter at the beginning of each new school year.

Because doctors' office schedules fill up fast during the back-to-school rush, it remains important that parents make an appointment as soon as possible to ensure their children have all the required vaccines before school starts. Therefore, the vaccine reminders that school nurses send to parents informing them of the school vaccine requirements remain a priority.

There are no changes in requirements for immunizations for the 2012-2013 school year. However, we will continue to phase in grade levels from the 2009 rule changes. The school requirements can be viewed at: [2012 -2013 School Vaccine Requirements](#)

Please be aware that students without proper documentation of the required immunizations, or an official exemption, will not be allowed to attend school. Immunization requirements can be found here: [School & Child-Care Facility Requirements](#)

Please call the Texas Department of State Health Services, Immunization Branch, at (800) 252-9152, if you have questions or need additional information.

"Protect 2 From the Flu" Campaign Continues in 2012

By Alma Thompson - Public Information, Education & Training

This year, the Immunization Branch will continue the education campaign, "Protect 2 from the Flu," to prevent flu among pregnant women in Texas. The campaign will begin advertising flu messaging targeted toward pregnant women in the summer.

The campaign, that began last year, made obstetricians and gynecologists (OB/GYNs) aware of the important role they play in getting pregnant women vaccinated,

and urged pregnant women to get the flu vaccine from either their OB/GYN or local community vaccinator.

The extension of this campaign will focus on addressing questions from women about getting the flu vaccine during pregnancy. Many women often ask questions about the safety of the flu vaccine to a pregnant woman and her unborn child, and when would be the best time to receive a flu vaccine while pregnant. Since October 2010, the CDC has recommended pregnant

women receive the flu vaccine as early as possible at any trimester.

The campaign will inform pregnant women of the benefits the flu vaccine provides to both the mothers and their unborn child. Such benefits include year-round protection from the flu for the mothers, and antibodies

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Resources Within Reach

By Clara Taylor, PIET

The following publications are new or revised as of January 1, 2011. Publications are available for order and/or download using the process detailed below:

- "2011-2012 Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Texas School Entrance/Attendance" (Bilingual), stock no. 6-14 revised Jan. 2012
- "2012-2013 Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Texas School Entrance/Attendance" (Bilingual), stock no. 6-15 revised Feb. 2012
- "Texas Vaccines For Children-Physician Recruitment Packet" (English), stock no. 6-102 revised Feb. 2012
- "Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule " (English/Spanish), stock no. 6-104/6-104A revised Feb. 2012
- "Recommended Childhood and Adolescent Immunization Schedule" (English/Spanish), stock no. 6-105/6-105A revised Feb. 2012
- "Texas VFC Patient Eligibility Screening Form" (Bilingual), stock no. C-10 revised Mar. 2012
- "Tetanus, Diphtheria (Td) or Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine - Vaccine Information Statement" (English/Spanish), stock no. C-94/C-94A revised Jan. 2012
- "Hepatitis B Vaccine - Vaccine Information Statement" (English), stock no. C-106 revised Feb. 2012
- "Human Papillomavirus Vaccine (HPV-Gardasil) - Vaccine Information Statement" (English), stock no. C-114 revised Feb. 2012
- "Adult Safety Net Eligibility Screening Form" (English), stock no. F11-12842 revised Feb. 2012

To order or download these publications or any of the Texas Department of State Health Services, Immunization Branch materials, please visit our web page at: <http://immunizetexasorderform.com>.

If you have questions or concerns call Jack Shaw at (800) 252-9152 ext 6516.

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that can be passed on to the unborn babies to help protect them for up to six months after birth. This is important because babies cannot receive the flu vaccine until they are six months old.

Research from a 2011 Immunization Branch study of focus groups showed that for pregnant women the flu vaccine was not usually top of mind. Awareness of flu risks during pregnancy is low, and most of the pregnant women surveyed said their doctors had not mentioned the flu vaccine to them.

In a related study component with a phone sampling of providers, 71% of practitioners stated they discussed flu vaccine with their pregnant patients only during flu season. The campaign will explain that because the flu virus is active year-round, it is recommended to get the flu vaccine even during the summer months.

The microsite-driven campaign continues to draw visitors to the English and Spanish websites at

Protect2.org and Protege2.org. The interactive website and corresponding interactive mobile-ready site include a web video, e-cards, frequently asked questions for patients, and a downloads page for doctors and other stakeholders found at Protect2.org/downloads. Resources on this page include web buttons in English and Spanish with embed code for the Protect2 sites, and a section to order literature such as posters and brochures in English and Spanish.

For more information, contact Alma Lydia Thompson at Alma.Thompson@dshs.state.tx.us.



An analysis of the microsite performance indicated that between June 16-July 19, 2011:

- There were 13,489 total visits to the English www.Protect2.org website, with 15,500 page views.
- There were 4,856 total visits to the Spanish www.Protege2.org website, with 5,380 page views.
- 88% of all English visits and 90% of all Spanish visits arrived there via direct traffic. This means visitors entered the site directly by entering the URL into the web browser. This indicates that the direct traffic was probably ad-driven.
- Mobile devices accounted for 78% of all visits to the English site and 86% of all visits to the Spanish site. This indicates that targeted audiences used cell phones to access the microsite more than they used computers.

For more information, contact Alma Thompson at alma.thompson@dshs.state.tx.us



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TVFC Eligibility Policy Changes

Eligibility in the TVFC program has undergone significant changes. Provider eligibility has expanded to include registered pharmacists. Patient eligibility has also changed. Children who have private insurance that covers vaccines are no longer eligible to receive TVFC vaccines at their local health department. Local health departments are now referring fully insured patients to their medical home for immunization services. Additionally, the criteria for the underinsured eligibility category have changed as well. The complete memo concerning provider and patient eligibility changes may be seen at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/tvfc/default.shtm>, choose TVFC Providers: Eligibility Policy Changes.

Flu Vaccine Ordering Ended for the 2011-2012 Season

Some formulations of the 2011-2012 Flu vaccine were available earlier than typical this year. DSHS was able to get the vaccine out to providers beginning in mid-August. By October all TVFC providers that requested flu vaccine received at least a portion of their order, if not all of it. Ordering for next year's flu vaccine ended on March 28th. This marks the fourth year the flu vaccine has been ordered online. We look forward to continuing prompt and equitable distribution of the flu vaccine for the 2012-2013 season.

For more information, contact shirley.rocha@dshs.state.tx.us

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This annual observance highlights the need for routine and timely vaccinations to protect infants and children 24 months and younger from vaccine-preventable diseases. It reminds parents and other caregivers to vaccinate their children, starting at birth, against vaccine-preventable diseases by following the recommended immunization schedule. Events across the United States focus local and national attention on the importance of vaccines. Awareness and education events are planned and implemented by local health departments and health service regions.

For more information, contact markel.rojas@dshs.state.tx.us

**Got an idea for The Upshot?
Send an e-mail to the editor!**



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KNOW MORE ABOUT YOUR

COLLEGE VACCINE REQUIREMENTS

For more information, visit CollegeVaccineRequirements.com!

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