



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

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November 14, 2007

TO: Washington State Board of Health Members

FROM: Dr. Patricia Ortiz, SBOH Member

SUBJECT: POTENTIAL RECONSIDERATION WAC 246-100-166 LANGUAGE REGARDING PROOF OF IMMUNITY AGAINST VARICELLA

Summary

At its October 10, 2007 meeting, the State Board of Health passed a motion to update the school and child care immunization rule, WAC 246-100-166, to reflect the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) *2007 Recommended Childhood and Adolescent Immunization Schedule*. This schedule is used to establish “ages and intervals” (age-appropriate doses and courses) for vaccines that protect against the diseases the Board identifies in rule. With this change, schools and child care centers would be required to follow the 2007 schedule beginning in the 2008–2009 school year. Varicella, commonly known as chickenpox, is the only vaccine among those required for school entry that is significantly affected by this update in the schedule.

At the October meeting, the Board also heard about ACIP recommendations for acceptable proof of immunity against varicella. These were published in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* dated June 22, 2007/56 (RR-4). Like the ACIP schedule itself, this is a national consensus standard reflecting best available science. Based on ACIP recommendations, the Board adopted rule revisions that meant that parent documentation of disease history would not be considered proof of a child's immunity against varicella after July 1, 2008.

According to page 16 of the June 22 MMWR, evidence of immunity to varicella may include “diagnosis or verification of a history of varicella disease by a health-care provider” or “diagnosis or verification of a history of herpes zoster by a health-care provider.” Herpes zoster can affect children who had chickenpox before the age of one year and children whose immune system is weakened. The Board also reviewed public comments indicating concerns about limiting the options for documenting proof of varicella immunity. I am proposing, therefore, that the Board reconsider its October 10 motion to approve the rule as published and consider amending the published rule to allow these two ways of providing evidence of immunity to varicella to the rule.

Recommended Board Action

The chair will entertain a motion to reconsider the Board's October 10 vote to approved revisions to WAC 246-100-166 as published in WSR 07-18-091 without amendment.

The Board may choose to consider, amend if necessary, and adopt the following motion:

The Board amend the revised WAC 246-100-166 as published in WSR 07-18-091 to add the following to the end of section (3)c of the proposed rule:

- 1. Diagnosis or verification of a history of varicella disease by a health-care provider.***
- 2. Diagnosis or verification of a history of herpes zoster by a health-care provider.***