

## IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM CHILD PROFILE UPDATE

January 1, 2009

### **Vaccine Storage and Handling: Dormitory Style Refrigerator Replacement Protocol**

Beginning in 2009, providers participating in the Washington Childhood Vaccine Program must not use dormitory style refrigerators for storing vaccines received through the program. Providers currently using dormitory style refrigerators must replace them. New providers must have an approved non-dormitory style refrigerator for storing vaccines prior to receiving vaccine from the program. The items outlined below are meant to provide guidance to local health jurisdictions and state staff in working with providers to ensure these storage standards are met.

#### **Initial Assessment:**

Each provider's storage practices must be assessed on a case by case basis. In some cases it will be appropriate for a replacement plan to be developed, and providers to be allowed to use existing vaccine. In other cases, local health jurisdiction (LHJ) or state staff may need to suspend the provider from the program, and remove publicly purchased vaccine from the site until storage units and practices are updated. Dormitory style refrigerators may be used for day use, but may not be used for overnight or long term (routine) storage.

#### **Assessment of adequacy of storage unit:**

The storage unit can be determined to be adequate for the provider to maintain and use the current vaccine inventory while waiting on a replacement unit based on the following:

- Review the temperature logs for the past 3 months. If the temperature log shows no temperature excursions.
- At the time of the assessment the temperature is in range.
- The freezer unit in a dormitory style refrigerator is not in use.

#### **If these criteria are met:**

- A written plan must be developed and signed by the provider for replacing the dormitory style refrigerator.
- The date of replacement must be 5 days prior to the providers next planned vaccine order. The 5 day time period is meant to allow for the new unit to be monitored for stability prior to receiving a new vaccine order.
- The LHJ or state staff must follow-up prior to the placement of the next vaccine order to verify the new unit is in place and maintaining adequate temperatures to support vaccine storage.
- A written response should be sent to the provider, detailing the replacement plan and time frame, and outlining consequences should the provider not comply.
- The written response should be cc'd to the state Department of Health.

#### **If these criteria are not met:**

- Removal of the vaccine from the provider office should be considered after consultation with LHJ leadership. The provider may be suspended from the program until corrections are made.
- A written response should be sent to the provider, detailing the concerns leading to the removal of vaccines, and necessary corrective action steps.
- The written response should be cc'd to the state Department of Health.