



WASHINGTON STATE

Board of Health

ALWAYS WORKING FOR A SAFER AND HEALTHIER WASHINGTON

DATE: July 8, 2009

TO: Washington State Board of Health Members

FROM: Dr. Patricia Ortiz, SBOH Member

SUBJECT: **WAC 246-100-202(E), HEARING ON PROPOSED RULE FOR PROPHYLACTIC TREATMENT TO PREVENT OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM**

Background and Summary:

WAC 246-100-202(e) lists the duties of health care providers related to sexually transmitted diseases. The rule specifies that those attending or assisting in births must treat newborns' eyes to prevent gonococcal ophthalmia neonatorum, an eye infection that can cause blindness if left untreated.

The current rule references an outdated Department of Social and Health Services policy statement issued in 1981. This policy statement lists a prophylactic treatment regimen that is no longer recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Pediatrics. On November 25, 2008, the Board filed a CR-101 to initiate rule making. The rule revision addresses the outdated protocol and specifies that documentation is needed when parents refuse treatment.

Today the Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed rule revisions and consider adoption. Bat-Sheva Stein from the Maternal Child Health program at the Department of Health will describe the proposed rule changes and stakeholder response received to date.

Recommended Board Action:

Depending on testimony offered and the Board's discussions, the Board may choose to consider, amend if necessary, and adopt the following motion:

The Board adopts the revised WAC 246-100-202(e) as published in WSR 09-11-110.