



Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.
Governor

Gregory N. Larkin, M.D., F.A.A.F.P.
State Health Commissioner

May 18, 2011

Dear Primary Care Provider:

In Indiana, many community physicians are referring patients with adequate health insurance to local health departments for vaccinations that are intended only for residents who are without insurance or who are under-insured and unable to pay for the immunizations. Misapplications of these state and federally funded vaccinations will lead to premature depletion of vaccination supplies in local health departments.

Therefore, the Indiana State Department of Health's (ISDH) Immunization Division issued new childhood and adult eligibility policies for publicly funded vaccines effective July 1st. Local health departments will be advised to primarily provide publicly funded vaccines to those residents whom either lack the ability to pay for vaccinations or lack the insurance to cover them. Additionally, local health departments will be advocating that community physicians provide vaccinations to their insured patients. Appropriately using both private and public resources will best assure broader community immunizations and therefore a safer and better protected environment.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to promote the Children & Hoosiers Immunization Registry Program (CHIRP). It is operated by ISDH and includes immunization records of children and adults. Immunization data is confidential and available only to authorized registry users. CHIRP also has successfully established electronic imports (or interfaces) with several Electronic Medical Record (EMR) and Electronic Health Record (EHR) applications, thereby eliminating "double data entry" for providers. In addition to a one-way connection from providers to CHIRP, a bi-directional connection also can be established so providers receive immunization data from CHIRP. In the near future, several state Health Information Organizations (HIOs) will have bi-directional access to CHIRP, thus allowing the thousands of physicians interacting with a HIO to directly extract and enter patient CHIRP data. Thus, providers and CHIRP are kept current with all vaccinations associated with a particular record.

Few public health interventions are as important as an immunized population. ISDH solicits your suggestions to improve the delivery of Hoosier immunizations in both the uninsured, under-insured and insured populations. Thank you for ensuring children are fully immunized.

Sincerely,

Gregory N. Larkin, MD, F.A.A.F.P., F.A.C.O.E.M.
State Health Commissioner