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Date: August 22, 2012  
To: Vaccines for Children Providers  
From: Daniel Hopfensperger, Program Director  
Wisconsin Immunization Program  
Subject: 317 Vaccine Policy Change

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Hopfensperger".

Due to a change in federal policy, as of October 1, 2012, individuals whose insurance covers immunizations will not be able to be immunized with state-supplied vaccine at local health departments, even if the insurance includes a high deductible or co-pay, or the plan's deductible has not been met. As a result of the policy change, vaccine providers will experience an increased demand for immunizations and are encouraged to be proactive and reach out to their patients and offer needed immunization services.

Uninsured children and those eligible for the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program may continue to receive their immunizations from a private health care provider who participates in the VFC program or at their local health department.

The current exceptions to this policy change will be pertussis-containing vaccines (because of the current statewide outbreak in Wisconsin) and influenza vaccine, including influenza vaccine for school-based clinics. Local Health Departments may still continue to use state-supplied vaccine in these instances.

During the back-to-school time, many parents will be working to ensure that their children are in compliance with the immunization requirements for school. To assist vaccine providers with identifying patients who need immunizations, the Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR) has tools such as the ability to generate reports of children who are not up-to-date with their vaccinations, as well as letters and labels for reminder and recall efforts. For assistance, please contact the WIR Help Desk at (608) 266-9691 or [dhswirhelp@wisconsin.gov](mailto:dhswirhelp@wisconsin.gov). Also, as practices work to schedule patients for immunizations, please keep in mind that most insurance plans do not apply deductibles or co-pays towards preventative services, which often includes visits for immunizations. Therefore, some patients may need immunization-only appointments to keep their costs to a minimum.

We understand that many parents have used the local health department in the past for their child's vaccinations, regardless of insurance status, and this change may cause some inconvenience. We hope that families and vaccine providers can work together to reach the goal of ensuring all children are appropriately vaccinated. Making sure that children of all ages receive all of the recommended vaccinations on time is one of the most important things we can do to ensure children's long-term

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health—as well as the health of family, friends, and others in the community. We thank you for working with us to protect the health of all Wisconsin's children.

For questions regarding this change, please contact Dan Hopfensperger, the Wisconsin Immunization Program Manager, at [Dan.Hopfensperger@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Dan.Hopfensperger@wisconsin.gov).