



Health Advisory

Please deliver a copy of the accompanying alert to each provider in your organization.

Thank you

Questions regarding this alert may be directed to the office of:

Alan Melnick, MD, MPH
Health Officer

Clark County Public Health
Cowlitz County Health Department
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Please Distribute

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for specific incident for situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.



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HEALTH ADVISORY

May 17, 2012

TO: Physicians and other Healthcare Providers

FROM: Alan Melnick, MD, MPH, CPH, Health Officer

RE: Providers asked to administer back-to-school vaccinations **by July 1** this year

Clark County Public Health is encouraging physicians and other healthcare providers to begin early back-to-school vaccination efforts this spring. As you may be aware, Columbia United Providers (CUP) and Community Health Plan of Washington (CHPWA) were not awarded contracts from the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) for their managed Medicaid programs. Instead, the HCA awarded contracts to Molina Healthcare, Inc. and Coordinated Care Corporation, both out-of-state insurance companies.

We have concerns about whether Molina or Coordinated Care have developed network adequacy for Clark County, and understand that CUP is aggressively pursuing opportunities to be a plan choice for members and providers. However, because a gap in medical services might occur for patients currently covered by CUP and CHPWA's managed care plans between the time that the current contracts expire on July 1 and the time Medicaid patients get new assignments, we are recommending an early immunization strategy. This potential gap in service may reduce the number of healthcare providers available to administer back-to-school immunizations this summer and early fall, when the back-to-school vaccination rush typically surges, resulting in long wait times and unimmunized children waiting to register for school.

Because of this, Clark County Public Health is urging providers to give back-to-school vaccinations to pre-school and school-age patients before July 1. We are asking providers to:

- Ensure they have an adequate stock of vaccine and to immediately order any vaccines that are in short supply.
- Identify children who are due for their vaccinations and notify parents that now is the time to get kids vaccinated.
- Set up back-to-school vaccination clinics in May and June.
- Review new state vaccine requirements (provided below) and the complete schedule of required vaccinations.

Changes to vaccination requirements in Washington State

- Updated national guidelines from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) now allow children to get Tdap vaccine regardless of the interval from their last DtaP or Td vaccination.
- For the school year 2012–2013, one dose of Tdap is required for children in grades 6 through 11.

For a complete schedule of required vaccinations for childcare, pre-school and K-12 attendance, see the Washington Department of Health website at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/immunize/schools/vaccine.htm>.