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To: Health Officers
Immunization Program Coordinators
Communicable Disease Control Officers
California Immunization Coalition members
Other interested health care professionals

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Save the Date—Virtual Town Hall webcast airs February 19, 2009

Misinformation about the safety of childhood vaccines has become one of the top challenges in public health today. In response to the challenge, the Immunization Branch will air the virtual town hall webcast, *Vaccines: Wading through the Confusion*, February 19, 2009 from 10:00-11:30 am. The program will then be available until June 30, 2009 as a podcast and an archived webcast.

The webcast will provide frank discussion about parents' questions and fears about vaccines, and will feature a panel of medical, scientific, public health, and communications professionals. The panel will also include parents whose lives have been touched by vaccine-preventable disease or by autism, as well as parents seeking reliable information to help them keep their children safe and healthy. Panel members will provide their own perspectives, drawing on science, medicine, ethics, and personal experience as they discuss hot-button vaccine topics.

The webcast launch will provide opportunities for viewer participation, including a live question-and-answer session, online polling, and a blog site. Registration information will be available by the end of December. Until then, contact Edgar.Ednacot@cdph.ca.gov for additional information.

It's Not Too Late to be Vaccinated Against Influenza

Flu season is already underway, but there is still time to be vaccinated. There is an ample supply of vaccine this season, so anyone who wants protection from influenza should be vaccinated. To promote late season influenza vaccination, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has proclaimed the week of December 8-14, 2008 as National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW). The purpose of this national observance is to maintain awareness of the need for influenza vaccination during December and beyond. CDC has several [tools available to promote late season influenza vaccinations](#), including a media toolkit, influenza e-cards, educational podcasts, and downloadable web banners.

In addition to promoting influenza vaccination, public health advocates should continue to encourage children and adults to use hand and [respiratory hygiene techniques](#) such as frequent hand-washing with soap and water, using alcohol-based hand-sanitizer, covering one's cough, and staying home from work or school when ill. The Immunization Branch helps local health departments, coalitions, and health care providers reach out to populations at risk for serious influenza complications. A variety of influenza-related educational pieces are available online on the Branch's [Flu Prevention Materials page](#).

Mass Flu Vaccination Clinics Build Preparedness

This fall, local health departments organized and held mass influenza vaccination clinics throughout the state. Thousands of Californians received free or low-cost flu vaccine. The planning and execution of these clinics help prepare California communities for pandemic influenza and other public health emergencies.

Here are the results of several local mass vaccination clinics:

- To test its capacity to respond simultaneously at multiple sites, Merced County immunized more than 2,100 residents at three walk-in clinics on October 29. Approximately 85 staff and volunteers participated. Promotional information was available in English, Spanish, and Hmong. When appropriate, staff vaccinated persons with disabilities in their vehicles.
- Alameda County vaccinated more than 1850 first responders in Oakland, Hayward, and Fremont. Oakland's exercise was mandatory for the police force and voluntary for the fire department. Local nursing students assisted in the clinics.
- San Joaquin County immunized 1,270 residents at a drive-through clinic at the county fairgrounds. The clinic had five lanes for vaccinator stations, with special designations for Spanish speakers, other languages, and busses and vans. An "express lane" was provided for single drivers. School nurses helped to administer vaccinations.
- San Benito County immunized 475 people at a veteran's memorial building. Local nursing students assisted and received on-site training.
- Kings County immunized more than 1,000 people at its third annual clinic at the county fairgrounds. Participants were charged \$5 for a vaccination, but received a \$5 coupon redeemable at a chain of sandwich restaurants.
- Nevada County vaccinated more than 500 people at a pediatric clinic and a veterans' hall. Local nurses and WIC staff volunteered at the events.

- In Mendocino County, Immunization Program and Disaster Prevention Program staff vaccinated 432 children and adults at a fairground. Nursing students as well as volunteers from the fire department, Head Start, and other public programs provided assistance. A local nonprofit community health center hosted a simultaneous clinic, immunizing an additional 300 people.
- Sutter County partnered with local BT staff to immunize 422 residents at a clinic in a high school parking lot. The police department provided traffic control.
- The Santa Clara County Health Department immunized hundreds of people at a senior center.

Statewide Immunization Campaigns

“I Choose” Campaign to Launch in January

The Immunization Branch’s “I Choose” campaign will launch in January 2009. Developed in partnership with the California Immunization Coalition (CIC), the “I Choose” campaign promotes immunization through the participation of immunization champions and advocates in local communities. Campaign posters feature individuals who express, in their own words, why they believe in immunizations. The user-generated website, www.whyichoose.org, will allow community members to upload and/or view pictures and stories about why people choose to be immunized.



Campaign materials, including downloadable posters, poster templates, and other resources, will be available online. Campaign materials will be customizable, allowing community partners to adapt “I Choose” images and messages to any age group, ethnicity, or population.

The Branch is encouraging local coalitions, community-based organizations, and other partners to participate in “I Choose.” Community partners will expand the reach of the campaign, bringing it into schools, health care clinics, and other community settings. The California Medical Association Foundation (CMAF) has already adopted the “I Choose” motif for their most recent [AWARE toolkit](#).

For more information about the “I Choose” campaign and about implementing the campaign in a local California community, contact Jenny.Bailey@cdph.ca.gov.

Preteen Vaccine Week 2009

January 18-24, 2009 is [Preteen Vaccine Week](#). The observance is a result of the Immunization Branch’s partnerships with the California Immunization Coalition (CIC), the California School Nurses Organization (CSNO), the Preteen Alliance, and the California School Health Centers Association (CSHCA) to promote immunizations and the preteen doctor visit for 11- and 12-year-olds.



The American Academy of Pediatrics’ District IX promoted the observance to their membership in the Fall 2008 issue of *California Pediatrician*. The article, *Meeting the Need for the Preteen Vaccines*, written by the CIC to encourage physicians to promote preteen immunizations, includes the *Preteen Vaccine Toolbox for Pediatricians* (a collection of online resources) and a Q& A section, *Answering Parents’ Common Questions*, which provides sample responses to parents’ concerns about vaccines.

A primary component of the campaign is a video contest in which preteens create video clips about a variety of health topics, including how to deal with peer pressure, preventing vaccine-preventable diseases, and the importance of physical exercise. The Branch has emailed materials to IZ coordinators

to use to promote the contest in a variety of ways, such as distributing information about the video contest in malls. For more information about the campaign, contact Rebeca.Boyte@cdph.ca.gov.

B2B Wins NPHIC Award

The National Public Health Information Coalition (NPHIC) announced that the Immunization Branch's 2008 *Brochure 2 Blog: Public Health Communication for a New Age* (B2B) webcast program won a Silver Award in the New Media category. Launched last May, B2B was a call-to-action for the public health community to learn about and engage in new web technologies for reaching a wide variety of audiences. The program highlighted techniques for enhancing social marketing, strategies for connecting families touched by vaccine-preventable diseases, and fresh ways to educate online audiences. The 30-minute webcast is available at www.brochure2blog.org.

Assessments

Kindergarten and Child Care Assessments

CDPH Immunization Branch extends its gratitude to local health departments and schools for their diligence in submitting their Summary Reports for the assessment of kindergarten student immunizations. Schools that have not completed their Summary Reports will need to do so as soon as possible, before the Christmas break. Immunization Coordinators are encouraged to follow up with schools that have not yet submitted their reports.

As a reminder, the *Immunization Assessment of Children Enrolled in Child Care Centers Summary Report*, CDPH 8388, was due to Immunization Branch Field Representatives December 1, 2008. Immunization Coordinators should submit their final school assessments to the Immunization Branch on December 15. Anyone requiring additional assistance should contact his/her Branch Field Representative or IZ Branch school assessment staff Madina.Sharifi@cdph.ca.gov or Teresa.Lee2@cdph.ca.gov.

VPD Data

VPD Updates Now Online

In response to requests from the field, the Immunization Branch website's [Health Professionals channel](#) now includes a section for local health department communicable disease (CD) control professionals, making it easier to locate vaccine-preventable disease (VPD) disease and conditions pages, report forms, and VPD surveillance data.

The channel includes:

- [Vaccine-preventable disease surveillance](#)
Reports on, and information about, vaccine-preventable disease in California
- [Vaccine-preventable diseases](#)
Links to information about various diseases and how vaccines can prevent them
- [Communicable disease case report forms](#)
Forms for use by public health professionals only

VPD Provisional Data

The latest provisional data for vaccine-preventable diseases in California with disease onset from January 1 to October 31, 2008 (end of third quarter) are available on the [IZ Branch website](#). The Branch will publish a provisional year-end report in mid-January on the same web page. For detailed surveillance data by jurisdiction, contact Jessica.Chang@cdph.ca.gov.

California Birth Hospital Medical Record Review 2008

In August 2007, the California Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program (PHPP), with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), began a statewide review of infant and maternal medical records. The focus of this effort is to evaluate prenatal screening and treatment practices for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and rubella. This review assessed whether maternal infection was accurately recorded on medical records. Supplementary information, such as immunization history and demographic information, was also collected. State and local health department employees conducted all medical record reviews.

When completed in early 2009, more than 3,200 infant and maternal medical records from 33 California birthing hospitals in 15 counties will have been reviewed. The Immunization Branch is drafting a preliminary report for each hospital with recommendations based on nationally recognized health care standards. Individual reports will be sent to all participating hospitals and their respective county Immunization Coordinator and/or Perinatal Hepatitis B Coordinator.

The PHPP expresses its gratitude to all the State and local health department employees who participated in this study. For more information, contact Catheryn.Salibay@cdph.ca.gov.

Provider Education

EZ-IZ Now Official VFC Website

Since its fall 2008 launch, EZ-IZ has continued to develop as a key resource for providers (and their clinical staff) who participate in California's Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program. The EZ-IZ training and other immunization resources are also appropriate for any health care professional looking for immunization information.



In November, the Immunization Branch redirected its old VFC page to the new www.eziz.org site. This month, the Branch alerted VFC providers by mail about the website URL change and about the new [online recertification](#) process.

EZ-IZ contains up-to-date VFC Program information, including [letters](#), [vaccine order status](#), and [forms](#).

Recently added features include:

- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Instructions for VFC program enrollment](#)
- New storage [equipment requirements](#) and posters describing the requirements
- [Common vaccine abbreviations](#)
- [Temperature logs](#)
- [Influenza Vial chart](#) for 2008

Visitors to EZ-IZ are encouraged to [register](#) for the free EZ-IZ online training lessons and to check back periodically to explore newly added immunization resources. Viewers should send questions about or ideas for the site to eziz@cdph.ca.gov.

CIC Launches Vaccine Safety Fact Sheets

In response to parents' increasingly frequent questions and concerns about vaccines, the California Immunization Coalition (CIC) recently launched a new suite of three vaccine safety fact sheets. The materials provide up-to-date information to help clinicians and public health workers respond to parents' most common questions.



- [Talking with Parents About Vaccine Safety](#) provides practical tips for health care providers about how to approach vaccine safety in a sensitive and compassionate manner.
- [Vaccine Safety: Responding to Parents' Top Ten Concerns](#) provides answers to the most frequent questions health care providers are likely to hear from new parents.
- [Vaccine Safety: 10 Facts for Parents](#) is for clinicians to give to parents who have vaccine questions.

The CIC has begun promoting the new materials to key California-based medical associations, including the California chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the California Academy of Family Physicians (CAFP), the California Medical Association (CMA), the California Academy of Physician Assistants (CAPA), and the California Medical Assistants' Association (CMAA). The e-announcement was also sent to the California Coalition of Local Health Officers (CCLHO).

The fact sheets are available at www.immunizeCa.org. Copies are also available from local health departments (see [New Educational Materials and Online Resources](#)).

HPV Vaccine Summit Brings Together Diverse Group

The 2008 HPV Vaccine Summit was held November 10 in Sacramento. More than 100 public health officials, clinicians, researchers, health plan representatives, and other decision makers met to discuss vaccine distribution, policy, surveillance, outreach, and other key issues. Interactive breakout sessions included topics on communication strategies regarding vaccines and vaccine safety, improving access to preteen well care visits, health education outreach in diverse communities, and public policy challenges. Summit participants were encouraged to generate ideas and share knowledge to foster future collaborative efforts. The Summit was sponsored by the California Medical Association Foundation (CMAF) and CDPH's HPV Vaccine Workgroup.

Vaccines

2009 Hib Special Immunization Schedule

Due to the continued Hib vaccine shortage, the Branch is re-issuing the [Special Immunization Schedule](#) for 2009. Immunization Coordinators will receive additional information about informing licensed child care centers in 2009. It is likely that informing efforts will be added to another routine mailing to child care centers closer to the end of this fiscal year.

Upcoming Events, Conferences, and Observances

Date	Event	Partners/ Sponsors	Website/ Contact Info
Dec. 8-14, 2008	National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW)	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	www.cdc.gov/flu/nivw/index.htm
Dec. 17	Preteen Vaccine Week Conference Call	IZ Branch	ww2.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Pages/PreteenVaccines.aspx
Dec 18 9:00am–11:00am PST	<i>The Immunization Encounter: Critical Issues</i> (webcast)	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	www2.cdc.gov/PHTN/imm-encounter2008/default.asp
Jan. 2009	Cervical Cancer Awareness Month	National Cervical Cancer Coalition	www.nccc-online.org/awareness.html
Jan. 18-24, 2009	Preteen Vaccine Week	IZ Branch	www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Pages/PreteenVaccines.aspx
Jan. 27, 2009 12pm–1pm.	<i>Innovative and Creative Ways to Celebrate NIIW/TIM 2009</i> , Education Hour teleconference	California Immunization Coalition	Contact: cmartin@communitycouncil.org
Feb. 19, 2009	<i>Vaccines: Wading Through the Confusion</i> , Virtual Town Hall webinar	IZ Branch	Contact: Edgar.Ednacot@cdph.ca.gov
March 3-4, 2009 Sacramento, CA	Conference on Health Services Delivery in Schools: <i>“Putting the Pieces Together: Policy, Practice and Resources for School Health and Mental Health”</i>	California School Health Centers Association	http://schoolhealthcenters.org/2009_Conf_Page2.asp
March 30-April 2, 2009 Dallas, TX	43 rd National Immunization Conference (NIC) <i>“Immunization: Blazing the Trail to Healthier Living”</i>	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/nic
April 20-21, 2009 Pasadena, CA	Annual Summit	California Immunization Coalition (CIC)	TBA
April 27-29, 2009 Baltimore, MD	Twelfth Annual Conference on Vaccine Research	National Foundation for Infectious Diseases	www.nfid.org/conferences/vaccine09
April 25-May 2, 2009	National Infant Immunization Week	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niw/

New Educational Materials and Online Resources

Resource	Type of resource	How to access the information
New VFC refrigerator and freezer requirements	Web article	Under Storage and Handling on www.eziz.org
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talking with Parents About Vaccine Safety (IMM-915) ▪ Vaccine Safety: Responding to Parents' Top 10 Concerns (IMM-917) ▪ Vaccine Safety: 10 Facts for Parents (IMM-916) 	Fact sheets	Print copies now available for order from local health departments. Also available online at www.immunizeCA.org .
Vaccines: Separating Fact From Fear	Video	On-demand viewing from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Vaccine Information Center .
School consent form for immunization information	Form	Online at www.ca-siis.org , under Registry Staff and Stakeholders, CAIR Forms.
The Childhood Immunization Schedule, Why is it Like That?	Fact sheets	Created by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Available online at www.cispimmunize.org
Q&A About Vaccine Ingredients		
Fighting Flu in Child Care Settings: Building Blocks to Increase Influenza Awareness	Fact sheets, posters, podcasts, brochures	familiesfightingflu.org and www.naccp.org
Google's Explore Flu Outbreak Trends	Online tool to search by U.S., state, or zip code	
Medical Societies: Adults Need Immunizations	Media release	American College of Physicians joint statement with the Infectious Diseases Society of America
Influenza pocket guides	Downloadable guide for providers	Created by the Immunization Action Coalition with the National Influenza Vaccine Summit.
Topics in Adolescent Immunizations	Webcast	Live presentation from December 16 to be made available as a webcast by the Immunization Technical Assistance Network izta@aed.org .
Shot-By-Shot VPD Stories	Videos	A new collection of VPD stories now available on YouTube.com.