Protecting Employees from Vaccine-Preventable Diseases
Provider Letter 12-17
Policy I-06-019
Vaccine-Preventable Diseases (Employee/Contractor)
Vaccine Preventable Diseases

- Hepatitis B
- Influenza
  - MMR
  - Diphtheria
  - Pertussis
  - Tetanus Toxoid
  - Varicella (Chickenpox)
Information and Education Regarding Benefits and Potential Side Effects of the Vaccines

VACCINE INFORMATION STATEMENT

Influenza Vaccine

Inactivated

What You Need to Know

1. Why get vaccinated?

Influenza ("flu") is a contagious disease.
It is caused by the influenza virus, which can be spread by coughing, sneezing, or nasal secretions.

Anyone can get influenza, but rates of infection are highest among children. For most people, symptoms last only a few days. They include:
- fever/chills
- sore throat
- muscle aches
- fatigue
- cough
- headache
- runny or stuffy nose

Other illnesses can have the same symptoms and are often mistaken for influenza.

Young children, people 65 and older, pregnant women, and people with certain health conditions – such as heart, lung or kidney disease, or a weakened immune system – can get much sicker. Flu can cause high fever and pneumonia, and make existing medical conditions worse.

Some inactivated influenza vaccines may contain a preservative called thimerosal. Thimerosal-free influenza vaccine is available. Ask your doctor for more information.

2. 2012 - 2013

3. Who should get inactivated influenza vaccine and when?

WHO

All people 6 months of age and older should get the flu vaccine.

Vaccination is especially important for people at higher risk of severe influenza and their close contacts, including healthcare personnel and close contacts of children younger than 6 months.

WHEN

Get the vaccine as soon as it is available. This should provide protection if the flu season comes early. You can get the vaccine as long as illness is occurring in your community.

It can occur at any time, but most influenza seasons last from October through April.
Employees Providing Direct Resident Care Must Show Proof of Vaccination

- Must provide documentation within 6 months of date of hire or by April 30th if currently employed
- Failure to provide documentation will result in being taken off the work schedule until required documentation is provided
What if you cannot provide documentation

- You may at your own expense receive the vaccinations.
- Make sure to check with your insurance provider to see if they will cover the immunizations or evaluate costs at different sites. Don’t forget the health dept is also a resource.
You may obtain laboratory evidence

- It is expensive to have these blood tests done but they are available.
- Speak to your provider, most will advise to re-vaccinated rather than go through the expense of titers/blood tests to test for immunity.
Do I have the right to refuse

- Morningside wants to encourage you to protect yourself.
- If you choose not to re-vaccinate or test for immunity you must sign a declination after you have reviewed a VIS (Vaccine Information Sheet)
Why Would Anyone Decline?

- You may have knowledge that you had the disease (this does not mean you are immune)
- You may know you have received the immunizations
- You may have a medical condition that prevents you from having the vaccination
- Religious beliefs
If You Fail to Provide Documentation or Sign a Declination Statement

- The organization (MSM) has the right to exempt an employee, contractor or other individual with privileges to provide direct resident care or to enforce the standard of requiring an individual to wear gown, gloves and mask for entire work day period.
When Might You Be Prohibited from Working

- An employee who has declined vaccination and has not provided proof of immunity from the listed diseases, may be required to wear the PPE or even be suspended from working if there is a public health emergency or outbreak of disease. Note that special local, state or federal mandate may require individuals to be kept from providing direct patient care.
Who does this affect

- Nursing Assistants
- LVN’s, RN’s
- Housekeepers
- Maintenance
- Dietary
- Social Workers
- Any employee who is determined to have direct contact with residents
- Contractors (therapy, nurse agency)
Frequently Asked Questions

» May I sign a declination and then later show proof of my immunity or vaccination?
  • Yes

» Will I be paid if I have declined vaccinations or cannot show proof of immunity and there is an outbreak and I am prohibited from working
  • No, however if you have PTO that may be utilized
FAQ

• Where can I go for vaccinations and how much do they cost?
  » Call ahead to your physician, CVS, Walgreens, WalMart or Metro Health. Cost varies, shop around.
So What Do I Do Now?

1. Bring your immunization record to your employee health nurse and she will make a copy for your record.

2. If you have not had the vaccinations or want to find out if you are immune to the listed diseases, you have 6 months to provide proof you have all immunizations or you have titres checked.
What Do I Do Now?

3. If you are a new employee you have 6 months from date of hire to provide proof of vaccination or meet with employee health nurse to review the Vaccine Information Sheets and understand the risk/benefits of taking the vaccinations.

4. If you are a current employee you have until April 30, 2013 to complete this requirement.
References

- 438.6
  DADS provider letter 12-17
- Texas Administrative Code, Infection Control, Subchapter Q19.1601,(e),(1),(a).
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention, MMWR Vol.60/No.7
Thank You

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