

October 20, 2010

In the October newsletter, the Board published a lengthy article concerning immunizations. One paragraph of that article read:

Pharmacists involved in administering vaccines must remain in compliance with these statutes and rules. Pharmacists are not allowed to administer influenza vaccines to individuals under the age of 19 unless they are enrolled in the Minnesota Vaccines for Children (MnVFC) Program. A pharmacy is not enrolled in that program until it has submitted an application, has had a site visit and has had the application approved. For information about enrolling in the MnVFC, pharmacists should contact the Minnesota Department of Health. Information about the MnVFC is also available on the MDH Web site at: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/immunize/mnvfc/lowcostimz.html.

That information was based on a series of e-mail exchanges with both DHS and the Minnesota Department of Health. Subsequent to the publication of the newsletter, a staff person at DHS sent an e-mail to another chain in which she stated that pharmacists can give influenza vaccine to children under the age of 19 without being enrolled in the Minnesota Vaccines for Children Program as long as they give influenza vaccines to children enrolled in the Minnesota Health Care Programs (Medicaid and Minnesota Care) and as long as they understand that they cannot bill for the vaccines given to children enrolled in MHCP. (In other words, pharmacies would need to absorb the cost of vaccines given to children under age 19 in MHCP).

On Monday of this week, Board staff confirmed with the Department of Health that pharmacists can, in fact, give influenza vaccine to children under the age of 19 without being enrolled in the Minnesota Vaccines for Children Program as long as they give influenza vaccines to children enrolled in MHCP and as long as they understand that they cannot bill for the vaccines given to children enrolled in MHCP.

Cody Wiberg, Pharm.D., M.S., R.Ph.

Executive Director

Minnesota Board of Pharmacy