



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

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Margaret T. Donnelly
Director



Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon
Governor

August 17, 2012

Dear Vaccines for Children Provider,

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is implementing changes to Section 317 policy. Beginning October 1, 2012, Section 317 vaccine may not be used for routine vaccination of any fully-insured individual. The CDC defines fully-insured as:

Anyone with insurance that covers the cost of vaccine, even if the insurance includes a high deductible or co-pay, or if a claim for the cost of the vaccine and its administration would be denied for payment by the insurance carrier because the plan's deductible had not been met.

Section 317 vaccines are a critical resource for filling gaps in the nation's immunization program. It is important that Section 317 vaccine be directed to those with the least ability to pay for vaccination and to assure timely response to outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases. In order to assure that 317 vaccine remains available for those who truly have no other option, it is important that all fully-insured children are vaccinated with vaccines purchased through their insurance. We want to assure you that the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program will continue to serve eligible children and adolescents.

This 317 policy clarification, which specifies that Section 317 vaccines should not be used for routine vaccination of fully-insured children, adolescents and adults, affects both the public and private sectors. Private physicians who have been referring their patients to public health clinics for routine vaccination will need to consider how to meet the preventive care needs of their fully-insured patients. Similarly, insurance providers will need to ensure adequate in-network providers to vaccinate all of the individuals covered under their plans.

The Section 317 Immunization Program has contributed to one of the most successful public health interventions in history. It is essential that we collectively provide good stewardship of this precious national resource by ensuring Section 317 vaccine is directed to those most in need. We understand that there are complex issues which will require thoughtful consideration, and we are committed to working with you over the coming months to find solutions. For more information regarding this policy clarification, contact the Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services, Bureau of Immunization Assessment and Assurance at 800.219.3224.

Sincerely,

Julie Boeckman
VFC/AFIX Program Coordinator

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