pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

AUG 11, 2022

Pennsylvania Immunization Program Newsletter

IN THIS ISSUE

2022 VFC Provider Re-enrollment

Vaccine Borrowing

Influenza Ordering: 2022-2023 Information

Protection from Meningitis, "It Takes Two!"

Protection from Meningitis

Hepatitis B

COVID-19 Vaccine for Children and Teens with Disabilities

CDC Recommends COVID-19 Vaccines for Young Children

Best Practice Refresher

Team Spotlight

Contact Us

Upcoming Events

VACCINES FOR CHILDREN PROGRAM

2022 VFC Provider Re-enrollment

The deadline to complete the annual VFC re-enrollment process was May 31, 2022. Any sites that did not complete the online re-enrollment will no longer be able to order vaccine. If your site is still interested in being a part of the VFC Program, please complete the re-enrollment process as soon as possible.
Re-enrollment instructions: https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/programs/immunizations/Pages/VFC.aspx

Vaccine Accountability: Returns & Waste

All unopened, non-viable vaccine, if ordered through the Department of Health must be returned to McKesson for Federal Excise Tax Credit within six months after the expiration date. These vaccines will still be accepted after six months, but this should be a rare situation. Any non-viable vaccine that cannot be returned to McKesson is considered waste. These vaccines must still be reported and accounted for but can then be disposed. Diluent is not a vaccine and is not returnable. **Opened multi-dose vials (e.g., polio) and COVID-19 vaccines are also not returnable.**

If the vaccine is being returned or wasted for any reason other than "expired," a Vaccine Incident Report and Worksheet must be submitted to Division of Immunizations (DOI) within five days of the incident.
Instructions for submission of return and waste:
https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/programs/immunizations/Pages/VFC-Resources.aspx.

COVID Vaccine Waste

Vaccine Accountability Forms do not need to be submitted for non-viable COVID vaccine. When any COVID vaccine becomes non-viable, make sure to update your inventory in PA-SIIS accordingly. Providers can then dispose of the vaccine in accordance with their site's policies.

Expired Influenza Vaccine

All expired/unused influenza vaccine for the 2021-2022 season must be returned before your site can receive vaccine for the 2022-2023 season. Influenza vaccine can be returned using the online Spoiled/Expired Returnable Form.

Vaccine Borrowing

1. Guidance for borrowing vaccine is as follows:
Providers cannot borrow state-supplied seasonal influenza vaccine for privately insured patients. This one-directional borrowing is unique to seasonal influenza vaccine.

- All vaccine borrowing, regardless of whether it's one- or bi-directional, must be documented on the Vaccine Borrowing Report. The borrowing report can be found on the VFC website, Resources and Forms page.
- The reason for borrowing cannot be provider-planned borrowing from either the private stock or the VFC stock. VFC providers who are suspended from ordering vaccine cannot borrow vaccine to compensate vaccine inventory. Vaccine Borrowing Reports must be completed and kept at the provider site for review during site visits.
- No VFC-eligible child should be turned away due to lack of VFC vaccine. These children should receive private vaccine until VFC vaccine is available.
- Failure to follow proper borrowing protocol may lead to disenrollment from the VFC Program.

- There is a lack of vaccine stock because of delayed or spoiled shipments. This bi-directional borrowing does not apply to influenza vaccine.
- Vaccine will expire soon and will be lost if not used. (Providers with a small privately insured patient population can use this option to administer short-dated, privately purchased vaccine to a VFC-eligible child and replace it with a longer-dated, VFC dose.)
- New staff calculated ordering intervals incorrectly, leading to a lack of either private or public vaccine stock.

Influenza Ordering: 2022-2023 Information

Communications have been sent out to both public and private sites to prepare for ordering influenza vaccine for the 2022-2023 season. Providers who have not received this season's information can access it at the following links:
VFC Public Providers Influenza Letter
VFC Public Providers Vaccine Order Form
VFC Private Providers Influenza Letter
VFC Private Providers Vaccine Order Form

Protection from Meningitis, "It Takes Two!"

Meningococcal disease can infect the brain, blood, and spinal cord very quickly. Complications from meningitis can be life altering and permanent. Even with treatment, 10-15 percent of people with meningococcal disease die. Protection from meningitis starts by providing preteens and teens with the Meningococcal ACWY (MenACWY) vaccine. This vaccine covers four out of five meningococcal disease serogroups. The more recently available vaccine Meningococcal B or MenB, targets the fifth meningococcal serogroup "B" associated with meningitis. Bacteria that cause Meningococcal disease can be easily and rapidly spread from person to person. Teens and young adults are particularly at risk.

Resources

https://meningitisbactionproject.org/
Meningitis B in 90 Seconds - YouTube

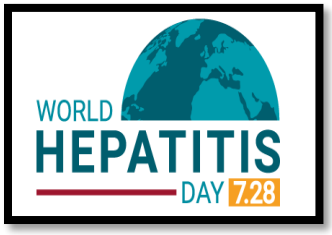
New Presentation for Quadracel

Sanofi has announced a new presentation and formulation of Quadracel® (Diphtheria and Tetanus Toxoids and Acellular Pertussis Adsorbed, and Inactivated Polio Vaccine). Quadracel is now available in a pre-filled syringe made without natural rubber latex. Sanofi has also changed the source of Inactivated Polio Virus (IPV) antigen from MCR-5-derived IPV (mIPV) to IPV derived from vero cells (VIPV), which aligns with that contained in Sanofi Pasteur's single entity IPV vaccine. Quadracel formulated with Vero cell derived IPV retains the same dosing schedule, indication, safety, immunogenicity data and pricing as the Quadracel vaccine formulation currently in use.

A single dose of Quadracel is approved for use in children 4 through 6 years of age as a fifth dose in the diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis vaccination (DTaP) series, and as a fourth or fifth dose in the inactivated poliovirus vaccination (IPV) series, in children who have received 4 doses of Pentacel® (Diphtheria and Tetanus Toxoids and Acellular Pertussis Adsorbed, Inactivated Poliovirus and Haemophilus influenzae b Conjugate [Tetanus Toxoid Conjugate] Vaccine) and/or DAPTACEL® (Diphtheria and Tetanus Toxoids and Acellular Pertussis Vaccine Adsorbed).
The Quadracel pre-filled syringe has been added to the CDC contract and is available for ordering in PA-SIIS.

ADULT IMMUNIZATION

July 28th is World Hepatitis Day. World Hepatitis Day brings the world together under a single theme to raise awareness of the global burden of viral hepatitis and to influence real change. The theme for 2022 is "Hep Can't Wait." In this month's newsletter, we will focus on Hepatitis B.



Hepatitis B, just the facts
Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver. The disease can be chronic or acute.
HBV affects 850,000 with 21,000 new infections each year.

Hepatitis viruses are transmitted in different ways:

- Contact with infected body fluids.
- Contaminated injection drug needles.
- Sharing of personal items with someone who has hepatitis (toothbrush, razors, etc.).
- Sexual contact with someone who has hepatitis.
- Close personal contact, living in a household with someone who is infected.

Some groups of people are at a higher risk for hepatitis:

- International travelers, especially those who travel to Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe.
- People who inject drugs.
- Individuals who live with someone who has chronic hepatitis.
- Individuals who have multiple sexual partners, or who have sex with someone who has hepatitis
- Men who have sex with other men.
- Workers who come in contact with blood, stool, or other bodily fluids.

Symptoms of hepatitis may include:

fatigue	jaundice	vomiting	joint pain
fever	dark urine	abdominal pain	
nausea	light-colored stool	loss of appetite	

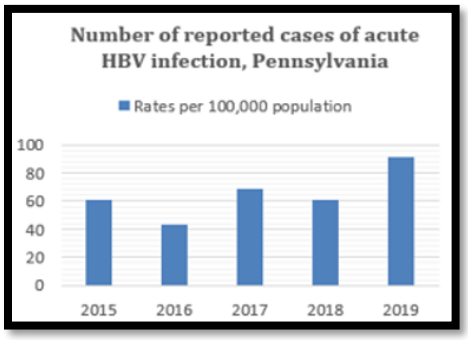
<u>Caring for your adult patients: Complications</u>

- Scarring of the liver (cirrhosis)
- Liver cancer and liver failure - HBV is the second most common carcinogen after tobacco
- Hepatitis causes 50 to 60% of all primary liver cancers worldwide
- Other conditions - chronic HBV patients can develop kidney disease or vasculitis

In addition, surveillance data indicates the following concerning issues:

- PA has the 4th highest newly reported chronic cases in the nation

- Philadelphia accounts for 74% (n=865) of Pennsylvania's 1,164 cases.
- Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), the primary form of liver cancer, continues to increase every year in both sexes, and in both incidence and mortality.
- HBV is highly infectious - 100 times more infectious than HIV.



Vaccinating your adult patients

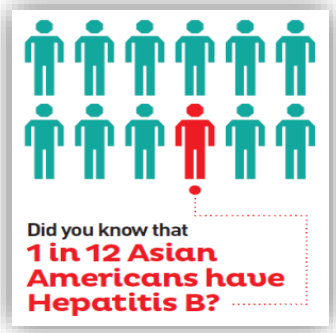
The following groups should routinely be screened for HBV vaccine:

- People at risk for infection by sexual exposure
- People with hepatitis C virus infection
- People at risk for infection by percutaneous or mucosal exposure to blood
- International travelers to countries with high or intermediate levels of endemic hepatitis B virus infection
  (HBV) infection (HBsAg prevalence of ≥2%)
- People with chronic liver disease
- People with HIV infection
- People who are incarcerated
- All other people seeking protection from HBV

Pay attention to health disparities with Hepatitis B infections., Culture and language barriers present unique challenges!

Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders carry 50% of chronic hepatitis burden in the U.S.

Among AAPI and foreign-born African community studies, we see infection rates of 4% - 15%. AAPI and African communities also face HBV-mortality rates that are six times higher compared to others.



Hepatitis B vaccines available for your patients

Three single-antigen vaccines and two combination vaccines are currently licensed in the United States.

Single-antigen hepatitis B vaccines

- ENGERIX-B®
- RECOMBIVAX HB®
- HEPLISAV-B™

Combination vaccine

- TWINRIX®: Combined hepatitis A and B vaccine. Recommended for people aged ≥18 years who are at increased risk for both HAV and HBV infections.

Provider Resources for your practice:

CDC's Know Hepatitis B Campaign: https://www.cdc.gov/knowhepatitisb/materials.htm

Hepatitis B Foundation: www.hepb.org

Learn more about hepatitis B with online trainings and podcasts, available from the Hepatitis B Foundation. Each training session includes one case study and a 15-minute didactic aimed to empower providers to manage hepatitis B. Recorded presentations can be accessed at this link: https://www.hepb.org/resources-and-support/online-training

National Immunization Awareness Month

August is National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM). During NIAM, encourage your patients to schedule appointments to ensure they are up to date on annual exams and recommended vaccines. Research has consistently shown that healthcare professionals are the most trusted source of vaccine information for parents and patients. Use NIAM as an opportunity to access CDC educational resources like the #HowIRecommend Video Series, which offers simple and practical guidance for having successful vaccine conversations with your patients. These short videos demonstrate how to make effective vaccine recommendations, address common vaccine questions, and take a team-based approach to vaccination. Providers may also be interested in promoting NIAM's message through social media platforms. Please click the following link to access National Immunization Awareness Month graphics provided by the CDC. These promotional materials are free, and properly sized to work with various websites, newsletters, or other messaging materials: National Immunization Awareness Month Graphics

Providers, Did You Know?

The CDC has the Adult Immunization Schedule (19 years or older) available for you to download. Save this schedule on your computer desktop or print it out for easy reference.

Resources

Color print - Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule (cdc.gov)
B&W print - Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule (cdc.gov)

Want to see vaccine schedules on your smartphone?

Download "CDC Vaccine Schedules" free for iOS and Android devices. This free tool provides the most current version of the adult schedule, including recommended vaccines for adults by age group and by medical conditions as well as adult contraindications and precautions table.

Features of the app:

- Color-coding coordinates with printed schedules
- Hyperlinked vaccine name opens as a pop-up with dose specifics
- Catch-up schedule for children and adolescents
- Related vaccine resources and websites are included
- Any changes in the schedules will be released through app updates

Download app free for iOS
Ctrl + Click on icon:

Download app free for Android
Ctrl + Click on icon:

(Requirements: Requires iOS 11.0 or later and Android 5.1 or later; optimized for tablets and useful on smartphone.

TEENS AND IMMUNIZATION

1 in 6 children ages 3 through 17 years of age has one or more developmental disabilities.

COVID Vaccine for Children and Teens with Disabilities

According to the CDC, children and youth with special healthcare needs require more care for their physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional differences than their typically developing peers. A special healthcare need can include physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities, as well as long medical conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, a blood disorder, or muscular dystrophy.

What You Need to Know

- COVID-19 vaccination for children and teens is safe and effective.
- Everyone 5 years and older, including those with disabilities and underlying medical conditions, should get vaccinated against COVID-19, including getting a booster, when eligible.
- Use CDC's COVID-19 booster tool to learn when your child or teen can get boosters to stay up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines.
- Children and Teens with Disabilities are at Increased Risk for Severe Illness from COVID-19
- Many children and teens with disabilities have underlying medical conditions such as lung, heart, or kidney disease, a weakened immune system, cancer, obesity, diabetes, some blood diseases, or conditions of the muscular or central nervous system.
- Children and teens with one or more underlying medical condition are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.
- Similarly, children and teens with developmental disabilities, such as cerebral palsy, an intellectual disability, or autism, may be more likely to experience mental health conditions from social isolation. They can also experience barriers to getting needed health care and other support, and can have other characteristics that increase their risk of COVID-19, including:
  - -Limited mobility
  - -Need for important support services
  - -Challenges practicing preventive measures, such as wearing a mask
  - -1 in 6 children ages 3 through 17 years of age has one or more developmental disabilities.

CDC Resources

- COVID-19 Parental Resources Kit
- COVID-19: Toolkit for People with Disabilities
- COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations for Children and Teens

COVID-19 VACCINE PROGRAM

CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program Provider Requirements

As a reminder, provider participation in the COVID-19 Vaccination Program is voluntary. Providers who participate must adhere to the CDC programmatic requirements.

- COVID-19 vaccination providers participating in the CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program are required to sign a CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program Provider Agreement.
- Providers are responsible for adhering to all requirements outlined in the agreement, including updated recommendations, requirements, and other guidance provided in the footnoted web links incorporated in the agreement.
- Participating providers are required to accommodate staff who are conducting site visits.
    - CDC and/or state/local public health staff are required to conduct certain provider oversight activities in each jurisdiction.
    - COVID-19 vaccination providers and depot locations that store or redistribute COVID-19 vaccine must participate in COVID-19 quality assurance site visits and other educational opportunities associated with COVID-19 vaccination program requirements.

For additional information on programmatic requirements and updates, please visit the CDC website: COVID-19 Vaccination Provider Requirements and Support | CDC.

CDC Recommends COVID-19 Vaccines for Young Children

- On June 18, 2022, CDC endorsed the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) recommendation that all children 6 months through 5 years of age should receive a COVID-19 vaccine. This expands eligibility for vaccination to nearly 20 million additional children and means that all Americans ages 6 months and older are now eligible for vaccination. More information can be found in CDC's Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Approved or Authorized in the United States.

- During an ACIP meeting held on June 23, 2022, the ACIP voted unanimously to recommend that Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine be used as an option for children ages 6-17, in addition to its existing recommendation for children 6 months to 5 years and adults 18 and older. Dr. Rochelle Walensky, director of the CDC, endorsed the recommendation on June 24, 2022.

CDC Recommends Novavax COVID-19 Vaccine for People 18 Years and Older

CDC Director Dr. Walensky, endorsed on July 19th the recommendations of the ACIP recommending a regimen of a primary series of **Novavax COVID-19, Adjuvanted Vaccine** for people 18 years and older. Novavax is administered as a two-dose primary series, with the doses given 3 weeks apart. This vaccine is now available to order through PA SIIS.

Important Considerations for COVID-19 and Routine Vaccination

- **Use every clinic visit as an opportunity to vaccinate**. Well-child checks, Medicaid periodicity screenings, sports physicals, and other clinic visits all serve as opportunities for children to get COVID-19 vaccines and routine childhood vaccines that are due or were missed because of disruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ensuring children are up to date with all recommended vaccines will be especially important as families prepare for children to return to school this fall.

- **COVID-19 vaccine wastage may occur**. You should take every opportunity to offer the COVID-19 vaccine to all eligible children. For example, do not hesitate to open a new vial, even at the end of a clinic day, to avoid missing an opportunity to vaccinate a child. It is understood that more doses could be left unused even when providers follow best practices to use every dose possible.
- **Consider vaccinating children who are not current patients**. If your practice can offer COVID-19 vaccination to children who are not current patients and might not have a medical home, please consider vaccinating them as well. Providers receiving vaccines in PA must appear on vaccines.gov.
- **Promote** v-safe, the after-vaccination health checker**.** Through short, smartphone-based surveys, parents and caregivers can tell CDC how their children feel after COVID-19 vaccination. Hang v-safe posters in your practice, distribute v-safe information sheets, and recommend registering for v-safe during vaccination visits.
- Receive all shipments into PA-SIIS, reconcile inventory, and make sure that this information stays current

Updated COVID-19 Vaccine Schedule

Please visit the links below to understand the most recently updated COVID-19 vaccine schedule.
At-A-Glance COVID-19 Vaccination Schedule
Interim COVID-19 Immunization Schedule

Important Resources for Providers

- Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Wallchart 06172022 (fda.gov) (comparison chart of Moderna COVID vaccine presentations)
- Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Wall Chart 06172022 (fda.gov) (comparison chart of Pfizer COVID vaccine presentations)
- Novavax COVID-19 Vaccine: Vaccine Preparation and Administration Summary (cdc.gov)
- Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines | CDC
- Summary Document for Interim Clinical Considerations (Updated 6/24/2022)
  (NEW 6/24/2022)
- Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine for Children who Transition from a Younger to Older Age Group (NEW 6/24/2022)
- Pfizer-BioNTech for Children who Transition from a Younger to Older Age Group (NEW 6/24/2022)
- Find your COVID-19 Vaccine CPT® Codes | Types of vaccines for COVID | AMA (ama-assn.org)
- Childhood Vaccination Communication Toolkit for Clinicians | CDC (to encourage COVID and all the routine vaccinations)

Trainings for Providers

Moderna and Pfizer are offering educational webinars for COVID vaccine webinars to make the transition to newly available vaccine presentations easier. Please find the links to those webinars below:

Pfizer medical trainings - Pfizer Medical Information - US
Moderna office hours - Updates to Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine | Moderna, Inc. (livestorm.co)

BEST PRACTICE REFRESHER

Inventory Management

Proper vaccine inventory management is essential for accurate vaccine ordering and stock rotation at a provider's site. This is also essential for ensuring that a site has the vaccines it needs to provide care to patients. It helps in allowing the public to access sites that have vaccines in stock if they must set up an appointment for COVID vaccinations. The inventory data is regularly uploaded to vaccines.gov. Proper management of vaccine inventory also helps in preventing vaccine administration error by properly tracking expiration dates, getting rid of expired vaccines, and avoiding mix-ups.

Best Practices

1. Inventory management begins once a provider orders a vaccine shipment. To ensure that vaccines are not left unattended, vaccine deliveries should only take place during times when staff are guaranteed to be present.
2. All vaccine deliveries must be accepted and signed for by a provider upon receipt of a shipment.
3. We recommend that shipments of refrigerated and frozen vaccines be immediately examined for signs of damage and indications of a temperature excursion, as well as to ensure that the appropriate vaccine types and quantities have been received.
4. Once vaccines and diluents are received at the provider site, they must be immediately stored at the recommended temperature.
5. The shipment should then be marked as 'received' in PA SIIS.
6. In addition to receiving shipments, it is also imperative to reconcile inventory with doses administered, transferred, or wasted on a regular basis.

Whenever a provider has unresolved inventory issues, unreceived shipments, and expired vaccines, the ordering staff has the authority to place a hold on vaccine orders until the inventory issue is resolved.

Please visit the PA-SIIS website for links to quick reference sheets on inventory management - QRS (pa.gov). Additionally, please do not hesitate to reach out to RA-DHPASIIS@pa.gov should you have any questions about inventory management.

TEAM SPOTLIGHT!

We are excited to share that the members of **Pennsylvania COVID-19 Vaccine Management Team** were awarded the **Governor's Awards for Excellence, 2022**. The formal ceremony took place on May 20, 2022, where the award winners were handed a plaque by Governor Wolf.

Members of the team recognized with the award include Tom McCleaf, Jennifer Bixler, Sarah Edge, Jennie Harpster-Basiago, Christy Scheidler, Danny Bechtel, David Mattiko, Kristine Rosancrans and Robert Kobilis.

"I am very proud of this team's work which directly contributed to saving countless lives in Pennsylvania," Acting Secretary of Health Dr. Denise Johnson said. "Their tireless efforts to adapt to challenges while keeping up with the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out, on top of their regular duties, is an inspiration to us all."

Award recipients and other members of DOH pictured with Governor Wolf.

Kudos

CONTACT US

For all general concerns and questions please call our main line at **888-646-6864**. For program specific inquiries, you can also send us an email to following resource accounts:

VFC: ra-pavfc@pa.gov
Adolescent & Adult: ra-dhimmunize@pa.gov
COVID: ra-dhcovidvax@pa.gov
PA SIIS: ra-dhpasiis@pa.gov

If you have questions or follow up related to a site visit, please contact the field staff member that conducted the visit. Contact information of the field staffs can be found in the table below:

Region	Staff's Name	Email	Phone
Northwest	Connie Moose	cmoose@pa.gov	717-307-5257
	Wynne Dunkle	wydunkle@pa.gov	717-319- 4706
	Jenna Zuzek	jzuzek@pa.gov	814-494-7704
Southwest	Shawn Baer	shbaer@pa.gov	717-395-2885
	Connie Douglas	codouglas@pa.gov	717-395-3774
	Coleen Rush	crush@pa.gov	724-967-6049
	Lauren Risser (COVID)	larisser@pa.gov	412-773-0653
Northcentral	Robin Harp	rharp@pa.gov	570-327-3400
	Ali Wood	alwood@pa.gov	
	Shannon Garey (COVID)	sgarey@pa.gov	570-436-0981
Southcentral	Diana Kint	dikint@pa.gov	717-562-1499
	Hayley Eager	heager@pa.gov	717-395-6381
	Johnny Raynor	joraynor@pa.gov	717-395-1586
	Alpha Burke (COVID)	c-alburke@pa.gov	717-887-0597
Northeast	Bill Court	wcourt@pa.gov	717-439-5911
	Joe Shamonsky	jshamonsky@pa.gov	717-319-4713
	Lisa Myers	lmmyers@pa.gov	717-409-2912
	Tamara Higgins-Cain	thigginsca@pa.gov	717-395-3474
	Marie DeLuca (COVID)	c-mdeluca@pa.gov	570-814-6534
Southeast	Peggy Glass	pglass@pa.gov	717-299-7597
	Beth Smith	bethasmith@pa.gov	717-395-6450

UPCOMING EVENTS

Event	Date	Time	Purpose	Registration
Monthly VFC Webinar	August 18	12 pm – 1 pm	This is an opportunity to learn about the requirements of the program and ask questions. Current providers with any new staff or staff who want a refresher on the program requirements are welcome to attend.	An email with a link to register for the webinar will be shared via listserv.
Back to Basics Webinar for COVID Providers	Sep 12	10:30 am – 11:00 am	Educational opportunity for current COVID vaccine providers and /or their new staff. General information about the different COVID vaccine products, basics of immunization practices, preparation for site visits, etc. will be covered during this webinar.	Same as above.
Monthly COVID-19 Vaccine Program Webinar	Aug 18	10:30 am – 11:00 am	PA COVID-19 vaccine team along with Clinical Consult team at DOH will present and discuss programmatic updates, new CDC guidance and recommendations. There will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end of each webinar.	Registration (gotowebinar.com)