

**March 2019**

## **Tracking vaccine preventable diseases in Pennsylvania**

Vaccine-preventable diseases, such as measles, mumps and whooping cough, are still a threat. They continue to infect Pennsylvania's children and adults, resulting in hospitalizations and deaths every year. The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) analyzes surveillance data to monitor disease trends, detect outbreaks and evaluate the effectiveness of disease control programs and policies. Below are some vaccine preventable disease trends in Pennsylvania.

## **Vaccine Preventable Disease Trends in Pennsylvania**

- Pennsylvania had a total of 1,929 reported, confirmed and probable vaccine-preventable cases with onset in the 2017 MMWR year, which represents a decrease of 19 percent from the previous year.
- There were 985 pertussis cases in 2017. This represents a 38 percent decrease from 2016.
- The 116 reported mumps cases in 2017 represented a 673 percent increase from 2016. Eighty-nine of these cases (76.7 percent) were associated with a university outbreak.
- The 2017 five confirmed cases of meningococcal invasive disease represent a decrease of 78.9 percent compared to the 10-year (2008-2017) average.

## **Provider Q & A: Emergency plans and generators**

**Question:** We have a new generator, and it can maintain our units in the event of an emergency or power outage. Do we still need to maintain a back-up plan for emergencies since the generator has been installed?

**Answer:** All sites must maintain an emergency back-up plan, even those with generators available.

Details on what steps VFC sites should take, both before and during an emergency, can be found in Section 4 of the VFC handbook, [Section 4 - Vaccine Storage and Handling](#).

Preparing for emergencies should include the following:

- Identify and establish an agreement with an alternative vaccine storage facility with proper refrigerator and freezer units, proper temperature-monitoring capabilities and backup generator where vaccine can be stored in an emergency. An alternate site that is available 24/7 is preferred; an example would be a hospital. Call quarterly to make sure this facility is still available. Designate staff to be responsible for packing and moving the vaccine to a safe location. Ensure written descriptions of floor plans and vaccine locations are available, as well as 24-hour access to the building and vaccine storage units.
- Have the appropriate packing material on hand at all times, including insulated containers, cold/ice packs, bubble wrap, conditioned frozen water bottles and illustrated instructions for packing vaccines for transport. Have flashlights and spare batteries easily accessible.
- Develop a written emergency vaccine retrieval and storage plan which includes how to access the facility and storage area. Create protocols for proper handling of vaccines during transportation using VFC policy guides with Vaccine Transport Hourly Monitoring form and written transportation route to the alternate storage facility.
- Create an emergency call chain including provider staff, cold storage unit service contact information and local utility company emergency phone numbers.

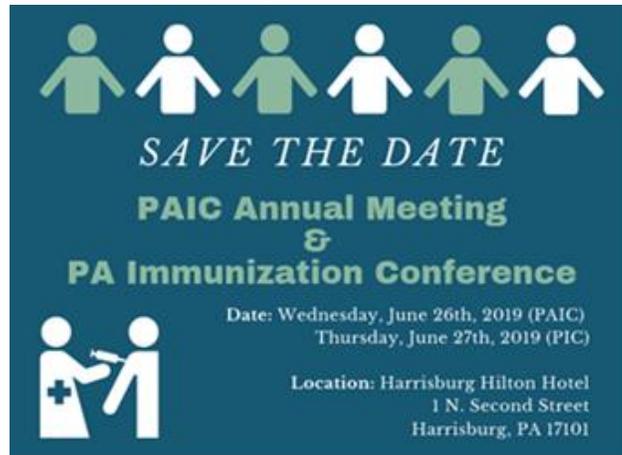
In addition, providers should review [this CDC guide on packing and transporting vaccines during an emergency](#).

**VFC vaccine: Ordering and Reconciling Inventory**

- All providers are recommended to order monthly (between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of the month). To expedite orders, please ensure that all shipments are indicated as accepted and inventories have been reconciled properly.
- You must reconcile your inventory before each order is placed. Requests for vaccines will not be approved if inventory is not reconciled.
- Your inventory on hand should match what is in your refrigerator and freezer.
- To accept your shipments correctly in PA-SIIS, you must enter the total volume received and be sure it matches the total volume shipped. Then select “yes,” so it populates into your inventory. Please contact VFC personnel for assistance at 1-888-646-6864.

**Save the Date: 2019 Pennsylvania Immunization Conference**

The 2019 Pennsylvania Immunization Conference will be held in Harrisburg on Thursday, June 27, 2019 at the Harrisburg Hilton Hotel in Harrisburg, Pa.



**What:** 2019 Pennsylvania Immunization Conference

**When:** Thursday, June 27<sup>th</sup> 2019

**Where:** Harrisburg Hilton Hotel, 1 North Second Street, Harrisburg Pa 17101  
*Use 200 Market Street as the GPS-friendly address.*

**Please add the Vaccines For Children email to your address book:** [RA-pavfc@pa.gov](mailto:RA-pavfc@pa.gov)