



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health – Women’s & Children’s Health Section**

1917 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1917

Tel 919-707-5550 • Fax 919-870-4824

Michael F. Easley, Governor

Camen Hooker Odom, Secretary

July 6, 2007

TO: Universal Childhood Vaccine Distribution Program (UCVDP) Participants

FROM: Beth Rowe-West, RN, BSN, Head.
Immunization Branch

SUBJECT: Determining Medicaid Status for Vaccines for Children (VFC) Purposes in Special Situations

The purpose of this memo is to clarify questions which have arisen regarding two special circumstances in which the Medicaid status of a child under 19 years of age needs to be determined for purposes of VFC-eligibility.* Questions have arisen from providers about how to handle the VFC status when children are dually covered, or have Health Choice coverage.

I. Dual coverage which includes Medicaid

According to the N.C. Division of Medical Assistance (DMA) which administers the N.C. Medicaid program, children who have Medicaid as one of their insurance providers are considered Medicaid-eligible *for VFC purposes*. Whether Medicaid is considered the child’s primary or secondary coverage is irrelevant for VFC purposes, they are considered Medicaid enrolled.

Therefore, if a child under 19 years of age has Medicaid coverage, regardless of any additional insurance coverage, they are automatically VFC-eligible, and therefore entitled to those state-supplied vaccines which are available to VFC-eligibles.

II. Health Choice coverage

A child who has Health Choice coverage is considered *to have private insurance* for VFC purposes. There has been some confusion because children under 5 years of age were moved from Health Choice to Medicaid in January of 2006.

For the purposes of eligibility for VFC vaccines, providers should make the assessment simply based on the child’s insurance information. Children under 19 years of age who present a Medicaid identification card are considered Medicaid covered, and therefore eligible for all state-supplied vaccines offered for children. Children who have a Health Choice identification card are considered to have private insurance, and are therefore not eligible for those few state-supplied vaccines which are restricted to VFC eligibility criteria.

**Although all required vaccines are available to all children in North Carolina regardless of insurance status (that is, these vaccines are universally available), certain other vaccines are available only for children who meet the VFC eligibility criteria. Currently, the state-supplied vaccines available only for VFC eligible children are rotavirus vaccine, meningococcal conjugate vaccine, and human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine. Pneumococcal conjugate is available for VFC-eligible children and underinsured children seen at any location.*

As defined by CDC, children through 18 years of age who meet at least one of the following criteria are eligible for VFC vaccine:

- **Medicaid enrolled** – a child who is eligible or enrolled in the Medicaid program.
- **Uninsured** – a child who has no medical insurance coverage.
- **American Indian or Alaskan Native**
- **Underinsured** – a child whose health insurance benefit plan does not cover the full cost of vaccinations and they receive immunizations at a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) or Rural Health Center (RHC).

Questions should be directed to the Regional Nurse Consultant for your region, or to the central office at 919-707-5550.

CC: SMT Joy Reed RINs RICs Steve Shore Central Office Staff Maclyn Powell Terri Pennington Peter Graber

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