



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health – Women’s & Children’s Health Section
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Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor

Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary

November 5, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: WIC/Nutrition Directors

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

Alice Lenihan, RD, MPH, LDN, Head
Nutrition Services Branch

Belinda Pettiford, MPH, Interim Branch Head
Women’s Health Branch

SUBJECT: Promotion of Whooping Cough Shots to Families in the WIC Program

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends families be immunized against whooping cough (also known as pertussis). In January, new recommendations were released further targeting unprotected children ages 7-10 years, and the expanded, new adult group are those 65 years of age and older, to get a vaccine for whooping cough. The vaccine they should receive is called Tdap. Tdap vaccine’s expanded recommendations are due to adolescents and adult-aged populations being responsible for more than one-half of the new cases of whooping cough.

Due to a waning immunity, North Carolina’s adults, and often new mothers, are frequently the source of whooping cough infection in infants. Infants under 12 months of age are especially vulnerable to whooping cough and when infected, often end up in the emergency room and can die. Hence, adults who have close contact with an infant under 12 months of age should receive a single dose of Tdap vaccine: family, church members, caregivers.

WIC Program staff is pivotal in safeguarding the health of families, so we ask your help in distributing the enclosed flyers to all families upon receipt of this mailing. To help guide clients, WIC staff should be familiar with their agencies’ plans and local availability of Tdap vaccine. WIC staff can consult with immunization staff in their agency (if available) about the availability of Tdap shots. Options for obtaining the shots include private medical providers or the health department immunization clinics.

If you have questions about this promotion, please contact your Regional Nurse Immunization Consultant and/or the Regional Nutrition Consultant for your agency. Thank you for your efforts promoting whooping cough vaccination recommendations for women and their families.

Enclosures

c: SMT
IMT
WHB RNCs

NSB WIC Unit Supervisors
IB Regional Staff
LHD Directors of Nursing

Marti Wolf
NSB RNCs

