

Howard County Health Department

Public Health Nursing

March 28, 2011

Beginning July 1st, there will be some changes to the Vaccines For Children (VFC) program eligibility. **The changes will affect some children whose parents have private (commercial) health insurance. On July 1st, the VFC program definition of underinsured will be clearly defined.** That is some children with private health insurance coverage will still be considered underinsured while others with private coverage will not.

Children will be considered **underinsured only** if their private insurance policy:

- **does not** include any vaccine coverage or
- **specific vaccines are not** covered under the policy or
- they have a **yearly dollar cap** in vaccine coverage and that cap **has been exceeded**

All other children who have private health insurance, but **do not meet** one or more of the above criteria, **will no longer be considered underinsured even if their policy:**

- requires a high deductible be met first or
- is a co-pay required or
- percentage based coverage (such as 80/20, 70/30 etc).

After July 1st, these children will be considered fully insured and therefore no longer be able to receive vaccines from the Health Department's VFC program. These children will need to visit their private providers to receive immunizations. Parents must know the terms and provisions of their child's health insurance policy in regards to vaccination coverage when making their appointments at the Health Department. Each child's eligibility for vaccines will be assessed when immunization appointments are made at the Health Department and again when they arrive for their appointment.

Please note there will be no changes in eligibility for children who have any form of Medicaid or who have no health insurance (uninsured). These children will continue to receive vaccines at the Health Department under the VFC program as they have in the past.

Adult Vaccine Eligibility Changes:

In addition, there will also be changes in eligibility as defined by the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) for our adult clients (19 years and older). These changes will also take effect on July 1, 2011. We are in the process of determining how we may be able to fill this gap. We will provide that information to our adult clients and to you in the near future.

If you have any questions, please contact us at the Howard County Health Department, Public Health Nursing, 765 456-2408 and press one for nursing. As always, our goal is the protection of our children.

Don Zent M.D., Health Officer
Howard County Health Department