Immunization: At Every Stage of Life

Please join the Immunization Coalition of Los Angeles County (ICLAC) in celebrating National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM), throughout the month of August. NIAM is a national event intended to bring focus and awareness to all vaccines that are recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

Communication Resources
When it comes to vaccinations, physicians are the patient’s most trusted resource and ally. NIAM is a perfect time to review the vaccination histories of your patients and to recommend needed vaccines at every stage of life.

You and your staff can use the following resources to effectively and efficiently promote the importance of vaccines.

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**
  www.cdc.gov/vaccines
  The CDC’s webpage offers health providers a wide variety of communication tools such as posters, logos, banners, videos, and social media messages. These educational resources can be easily adapted for use in your clinical practice and on your clinic’s web page and social media sites (i.e., Facebook and Twitter). For example, try using immunization posters in the hallway and doors of your clinic or stream immunization videos in your clinic’s patient waiting area.

- **NIAM Toolkit:**
  www.nphic.org/niam
  The National Public Health Information Coalition’s NIAM communication toolkit can help providers convey immunization messages to a variety of audiences during NIAM and throughout the year. The toolkit features a different population in each week of August and components are offered in PDF and Word format.
  - August 3-9: A Healthy Start: Babies & Pregnant Women
  - August 10-16: Back to School: Children, Pre-teens & Teens
  - August 17-23: Off to the Future: Young Adults
  - August 24-30: Not Just for Kids: Adults

Evidence-based Immunization Practices
In addition to discussing vaccines, clinicians are encouraged to use evidence-based immunization practices:

- Provide simultaneous vaccine administration to avoid missed opportunities.
- Use only true contraindications. (Refer to Vaccine Contraindications)
- Use provider prompts and client reminder/recall such as post cards, telephone calls and/or reminders in patient charts.
- Use an immunization registry, such as the California Immunization Registry (CAIR). Clinicians can save time and money with CAIR, a fully functional immunization information system. CAIR users can view vaccinations that were given to patients in their practice and other offices to identify vaccines that may be due at the office visit and upcoming visits, as well as print an official immunization record. CAIR also helps to manage a practice’s vaccine inventory/supply by recording vaccine manufacturer and lot numbers, and generating vaccine usage reports, and CAIR assists the provider by reminding patients when vaccines are due with system-generated reminders. For more information about the benefits of CAIR in your practice, please visit http://cairweb.org/

Remember: Immunizing patients with the recommended vaccines at every stage of life saves lives.

For more information about NIAM or ICLAC, visit the Immunization Coalition of Los Angeles County web page at www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip/ICLAC or contact W. Berger, MPH, ICLAC Coordinator at wberger@ph.lacounty.gov or 213-351-7440.