



Vaccines for Children Provider Update January 29, 2015

Vaccine Updates

Comvax®: No longer available. Please remove from your preference list in GRITS. Alternate: Single antigen Hep B and Hib.

Cervarix®: No longer available. Please remove from your preference list in GRITS. Alternate choice: Gardasil®

Pentacel® vs Pediarix®: Both products are available for shipment. To prevent vaccine administration errors, providers must select one brand as your preference. If both brands are selected, VFC will only ship the brand administered most often since your last shipment.

Single Dose Vaccines Available:

Providers may order the following vaccines in increments of 1 dose as needed – TD, MenHibrix, and Pneumovax 23. Order requests are subject to approval by VFC staff.

Additional Vaccine

Requests: Requests that exceed 30 doses above the amount presumed needed require a written justification explaining the increased need and approval by the Deputy Director or VFC Coordinator.

Program Updates

NEW GRITS I.P. Address Causes GRITS to Appear to be “Down”

The GRITS IP address has changed because of our recent server upgrade. AT&T made a DNS (Domain Name Server) change on Saturday 1/24/15. The DNS change allows a user to type the GRITS URL (<https://www.grits.state.ga.us>) via his or her browser, and the internet will then automatically direct the user to the new server location. The amount of time for a DNS to propagate varies depending on the ISP (Internet Service Provider) in your local area.

Currently, it appears that some locations have not received the updated DNS and as a result get “Page Cannot Be Displayed” or a similar error. If you are unable to access GRITS, we recommend that you first clear your browser history and cache to remove any references to the old IP address. If this does not work, we recommend that you access the GRITS website IP address directly by typing <https://167.195.76.10> in your browser until the DNS change is properly reflected in your area. If you access GRITS in this manner, you will receive an SSL certificate warning, but please know that it is safe to proceed to the site.

Manage Orders/Online Ordering via GRITS

On January 6, 2015, an email went out to all private provider sites remaining to transition to online ordering via the new manage orders function in GRITS. The email includes instructions on how to initiate the online ordering process including completing the online manage orders training. It is important that each site complete the transition steps, as VFC will no longer manually process orders as of February 13, 2015. Please see page 4 of this update for additional information.

Important Vaccine Availability Update

Providers using the new manage orders function to submit orders in Phase 1-5 should be aware of important vaccine availability updates listed in the yellow column to the left of this page. As a reminder, only vaccines selected on as preferences will be available for ordering from the manage orders screen.

Selecting preferences is required by both providers managing their inventory in GRITS and by sites that are manually entering inventory data directly into GRITS.

Flu Season Pre-Book 2015-2016

VFC's annual Flu Pre-Book Survey link went live Monday, January 26. Survey responses are due February 16. Click on the following link to access the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2015VFCFLU>

Data collected will be used to determine Georgia pre-booked amounts for the 2015-16 flu season. Please be sure to use previous years' doses administered and billing data to determine vaccine estimates you will need to vaccinate your VFC and PeachCare eligible children, 0 through 18 years of age, during the upcoming flu season.

Please submit one pre-book per clinic location. Verify your VFC PIN, contact name and e-mail address are correct, prior to submitting your survey. Incomplete surveys will be discarded. Clinics who successfully complete the survey will receive a confirmation e-mail once your responses have been reviewed and accepted.

*VERY IMPORTANT*** VFC will not accept hand written requests. All requests must be submitted through the survey tool. Any faxed or e-mailed pre-book requests for the 2015-16 season will be discarded.*

2014-2015 Flu Season – Shipment Update

All flu pre-booked amounts have been fulfilled. Providers with excess flu doses may send in a list of available flu doses to the Vaccine Logistics Associate at christy.banks@dph.ga.gov. Doses will be added to the short dated log to become available for transfer as doses are requested in the surrounding areas. Providers in need of additional flu doses may send their request including the VFC PIN# to DPH-GAVFC@dph.ga.gov. Requests will be filled by vaccine transfer or shipment.

Most of the current FluMist inventory will expire in February and March; however, there are some doses expiring at the end of January. As a reminder, the FluMist Replacement program ends January 31. Information about the FluMist Replacement Program can be found on the CDC website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/awardees/vaccine-management/excise-tax-flumist.html>

VFC Provider Requirements & Guideline Reminders – Vaccine Return Requests and Processing

The VFC Accountability Policy requires providers to account for each state supplied dose shipped to your practice. This includes doses administered data reported each month via GRITS or the manual reporting Excel form, doses wasted during transit to your site, and vaccine wastage that occurs at the site because a parent refused a dose that was drawn, a vial was damaged or left out, or temperatures are recorded higher or lower than the required temperature.

The process for returning expired vaccines is as follows:

- Providers managing inventory in GRITS must mark doses as wasted in GRITS.
- Manual reporters using the Excel form must include wastage data in the wastage section of the report.

- Wasted doses will be entered into VTrckS for processing and a return invoice will be generated and sent to the contacts on file for the site reporting the wastage.
- Wasted doses entered into VTrckS will prompt McKesson to send a return label to the site reporting wastage. Labels will arrive from McKesson in a white 4x6 envelope.
- Once the label is received, providers may place a copy of the return invoice in the box used to store returns, place the label on the box and hand the box to UPS during their next stop in your clinic.

The following items cannot be returned to McKesson:

- Syringes with attached needle or manufacturer pre-filled syringes removed from its original packaging
- Broken vials
- Viable vaccine (Vaccine that has not expired. Viable vaccine returned to McKesson must be replaced at the provider's expense)

The above vaccines (items ineligible for McKesson Return) should reported as wasted to VFC and discarded in a red biohazard bag or sharps container.

Questions regarding vaccine return should be forwarded to Christy Banks, Vaccine Logistics Associate via e-mail at: christy.banks@dph.ga.gov.

New Manage Orders Function Updates

We are currently in Phase 5 of our transition to online vaccine ordering via the new manage orders function in GRITS which allows **both** providers managing their inventory in GRITS **and** those manually submitting Excel reports to submit their vaccine orders online. Below is an abbreviated version of the email sent to all sites remaining to transition:

As a reminder, enhancements to the current system will include:

- Manage Order Screen: Allows order adjustments to be entered directly through GRITS
- Electronic Upload of Inventory Data: Eliminates the need to manually enter monthly shipment received data (for sites reporting via GRITS only)
- Order Tracking: Allows providers to track the process of orders placed, listed as 'Pending', 'Approved', or 'Fulfilled'
- Providers may update site information using the new manage orders, manage site menu option and changes will electronically update the site's profile in VFC's vaccine management database VTrckS ensuring that VFC's email distribution list remains current and sites are able to receive important program updates

Because logins are only good for 30 days, providers who submitted their requests for manage orders access early in January will begin to receive logins and instructions during the week of January 26. Once your email is received, all future orders must be placed online. Providers who normally submit reports during the last week of the month should wait to submit counts after your login credentials have been received.

The following steps must be completed prior to receiving access to the new manage orders function.

(1) Designated primary and secondary VFC contacts for your site must complete the manage orders training module and submit certificates of completion via email to DPH-GAVFC@dph.ga.gov. The training link can be found on the GRITS resources on the web or by clicking on the following link:

https://www.gritstest.state.ga.us/docs/ManageOrders_20FEB_2014_Final_Copy.htm

You can verify completion of the course by calling the VFC main line at 404-657-5013 or by sending an email to DPH-GAVFC@dph.ga.gov.

(2) Only one person will be granted access to the Manage Orders function. Please respond to this email with the PIN#, first and last name of the person selected, GRITS Org Code, and the email address for the designated contact.

(3) The person assigned to access the Manage Orders function will be assigned a new role in GRITS which will allow them to create a vaccine order via the manage orders function in the GRITS menu. **Manual reporting providers utilizing the Excel form to report will complete the manual reporting form, enter inventory counts into the new manage orders function in GRITS, submit an online order, and submit a copy of the manual report to VFC via email.*

(5) Once steps 1-2 are complete, VFC will send a follow up email with the new manage orders login credentials, detailed instructions, tips, and the Manage Orders Frequently Asked Questions document to help guide you through the ordering process. Please note, logins are only good for 30 days before they time out. Since many providers will not report again until the end of the Month, I will hold on to login requests until the week of January 19.

(6) Once assigned a manage orders user login, all future orders must be placed online. **The last day for manual order processing will be Friday February 13.**

VFC Basics – Important Reminders

RECORD temperatures a minimum of twice per day using an NIST or ASTM certified thermometer with a current certificate of calibration. Refrigerator temperatures should remain between 35°- 46° Fahrenheit and 2°- 8° Celsius. Freezer temperatures should remain between 5° or colder Fahrenheit and -15° or colder Celsius. Temperature excursions outside of the required range must be reported to VFC immediately!

VERIFY AND DOCUMENT eligibility status for each patient during each immunization encounter. Be sure to differentiate between Medicaid and PeachCare CMO (Amerigroup, Peach State, and WellCare). The two must be reported separately on the GRITS and the manual Excel reporting form.

RECORD date, vaccine manufacturer, trade name, lot number, and VIS publication date in patient records for every vaccine administered.

REPORT doses administered to Medicaid patients separately from doses administered to PeachCare for Kids® patients. Doses administered to PeachCare for Kids® patients must be reported in the PeachCare column of the manual report.

REPORT usage, inventory, and wastage monthly via GRITS. Monthly reports are used to replenish vaccine shipments based on usage and inventory totals. Replenishment totals are based on a 3-month storage cushion and are calculated as follows:

$$\text{Usage} \times 3 \text{ months} - \text{Inventory} = \# \text{ of doses to ship/doses presumed needed}$$

Note** Always review your GRITS Vaccine Accountability Report, Column 'J' for 'Doses Presumed Needed'. Review your manual Excel report for 'Doses to Ship'. Contact VFC immediately to modify amounts to maintain a 2-3 month vaccine supply. Email requests to DPH-gavfc@dph.ga.gov or call (404) 657-5013.

REVIEW GRITS monthly reports for errors presented as doses listed in the "Insured/Ineligible" column and doses listed as (-) or (over) on the Vaccine Accountability Statement. Submit a copy of the report and a written explanation of errors by fax or email to avoid shipping delays.

REPORT short dated vaccines 90 days prior to their expiration date. Per the VFC Loss Policy, providers are required to report expiring vaccines 90 days prior to expiration.

RETURN wasted or expired doses to McKesson within 6 months of expiration. VFC vaccine should not be discarded. Exemptions to this rule include expired/wasted multi-dose vials or vaccine drawn up into syringes but not administered (pre-filled syringes that have not been attached to a needle for administration must be returned). However, all wasted or expired vaccines must be reported monthly.

MAINTAIN a completed Vaccine Emergency/Disaster Recovery Plan in an accessible location in the event of refrigerator/freezer malfunctions, natural disasters, etc.

NOTIFY VFC of changes in staff, vacation, power outages, address change, etc. Physicians and nursing staff signed to the provider agreement are responsible for notifying VFC of any changes that may affect vaccine shipments.

REVIEW CDC guidelines for Storage and Handling and set protocols in place to ensure effectiveness of vaccine administered to patients.

The VFC Administrative Office is available to assist you with your needs at (404) 657-5013 or (800) 848-3868 or via email sent to DPH-gavfc@dph.ga.gov. Your Immunization Program Consultant (IPC) is also available to assist you with hands on training. IPC's may be contacted by calling the VFC Office. Remember, if in doubt, call VFC, we are here to help!