

MODULE

7

Provider Compliance and Monitoring—Quality Assurance (QA) Visits, Assessments and Education

Immunization Section—Vaccines for Children Program

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MODULE 7: Provider Compliance and Monitoring—QA Visits, Assessments and Education

What are QA Visits, Assessment and Education?

Federal and state requirements mandate the Florida Immunization Section conduct Quality Assurance (QA) visits, assessments and education with each enrolled provider receiving VFC vaccine. To ensure the quality of VFC vaccine and the integrity of the VFC program, the Immunization Section is required to conduct:

- Enrollment Site Visits
- Compliance Site Visits
- Unannounced Storage and Handling Site Visits
- VFC contacts, as needed
- Annual Provider Training

VFC site visits help determine a provider's compliance with VFC program requirements. This includes identifying potential issues with VFC vaccine accountability and determining whether VFC vaccines are being handled, stored, and administered in accordance with the laws and policies governing the VFC program.

The review and evaluation of VFC provider practices involves assessing verbal, written, and visual evidence encountered during the visit to determine if provider sites are following the requirements of the VFC program.

The goals of these visits are to:

- Identify areas where providers are doing well and areas needing additional follow-up.
- Identify the educational needs of VFC providers in order to support them with meeting program requirements.
- Ensure that VFC-eligible children receive properly managed and viable vaccine.

Additionally, site visits are critical opportunities to engage provider staff and develop and strengthen ongoing relationships.

Types of QA Visits, Assessments and Education

Provider Enrollment: This visit is required prior to enrollment for newly enrolling facilities or facilities that have had a break between enrollments with the Florida VFC Program. The purpose of this appointment is to ensure providers and their staff are provided with education about requirements and have appropriate resources to implement program requirements.

Compliance: A compliance site visit consists of an examination of vaccine management and delivery practices to ensure compliance with federal and state guidelines. It involves administration of a questionnaire, evaluating compliance with requirements and providing education. During the visit, there will be a formal review of vaccine management practices as well as a review of patient records and other documentation to assure appropriate vaccine eligibility screening and administration documentation is occurring. Providers will receive a report outlining visit findings, and if applicable, identifying areas of noncompliance in need of correction. Corrective actions with due dates for noncompliant practices will be provided at the time of the visit and completion required for continued participation in the VFC Program.

Unannounced Storage and Handling: The Florida VFC Program is required to perform unannounced storage and handling site visits to serve as “spot checks” on facility vaccine management practices.

When *Compliance* and *Unannounced Storage and Handling Visits* are completed, providers will receive a report outlining visit findings, and if applicable, identifying areas of noncompliance in need of correction. Corrective actions with due dates for noncompliant practices will be provided at the time of the visit and completion required for continued participation in the VFC Program.

Annual Provider Training Requirement: Certifying providers (enrollee), vaccine coordinators and back-up vaccine coordinators must view the Annual Provider Training webinar to meet the annual education requirements. Further instructions will be sent via Blast Communication each year.

AFIX Assessment: AFIX (Assessment, Feedback, Incentives, eXchange of information) is an assessment of your facility’s immunization coverage. AFIX includes four components: Assessment of immunization levels, feedback of immunization information to key staff, incentives to motivate and/or recognize outstanding performance, and exchange of information on best practices to improve immunization coverage levels. The goal of AFIX is to ensure that viable vaccines reach all children served by the provider site in accordance with the ACIP schedule. A successful AFIX process requires implementation of all four components.

Standards for Pediatric Immunization Practices

CDC developed the *Standards for Child and Adolescent Immunization Practices*, resulting in collaboration with a 35-member working group representing 22 public and private agencies that had input from state and local health departments, physician and nursing organizations, and public and private providers involved in clinical care and prevention health services. The Standards represent the consensus of the National Vaccine Advisory Committee (NVAC) and the working group that address the most essential and desirable immunization policies and practices for an immunization service. *A Guide to Contraindications and Precautions to Immunization*, which reflects the current recommendations of the ACIP, as well as the Committee on Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), accompany the Standards.

Several medical and public health organizations have endorsed these Standards. These organizations encourage adherence to the *Standards for Child and Adolescent Immunization Practices* as a key element in our national strategy to administer vaccines more efficiently and effectively to the nation's children.

For links to the Standards see **Appendix 7** or <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00020935.htm>