

GUIDANCE:

PHARMACIST ADMINISTRATION OF CHILDHOOD VACCINES PURSUANT TO THE THIRD AMENDMENT TO THE HHS SECRETARY'S DECLARATION UNDER THE PREP ACT FOR MEDICAL COUNTERMEASURES AGAINST COVID-19

September 29, 2020

On August 24, 2020, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Azar issued a third amendment to his Declaration authorized under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19 ("Declaration"). The third amendment authorizes state-licensed pharmacists and licensed interns acting under the supervision of licensed pharmacists, who meet the qualifications set forth in the third amendment, to order and administer any vaccine that the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends to persons ages three (3) through eighteen (18) according to ACIP's standard immunization schedule.

The purpose of the third amendment is to address the findings by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) of a decline in routine pediatric vaccine ordering and doses administered might indicate that U.S. children and their communities face increased risks for outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases. The CDC suggested that the "decrease in rates of routine childhood vaccinations were due to changes in healthcare access, social distancing, and other COVID-19 mitigation strategies." HHS Secretary Azar has determined that the "decrease in childhood-vaccination rates is a public health threat and a collateral harm caused by COVID-19."

Consistent with the authority set forth in HHS third amendment to the Declaration, the District of Columbia Board of Pharmacy and Department of Health have begun the process of promulgating emergency regulations to expand existing vaccination authorities to include patients between the ages of three (3) through eighteen (18). In support of these regulations, we are also issuing the following guidance:

- All pharmacists licensed in the District of Columbia and certified to administer immunizations and vaccinations, and all pharmacists licensed in the District of Columbia who meet the requirements set forth in the Declaration are authorized to order and administer any vaccine that the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends to persons ages three (3) through eighteen (18) according to ACIP's standard immunization schedule.
- Pharmacists meeting the requirements set forth above, are authorized to allow licensed pharmacy interns who meet the requirements set forth in the Declaration to administer any vaccine that the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends to persons ages three (3) through eighteen (18) according to ACIP's standard immunization schedule.

Additionally, pursuant to the Declaration, the following requirements must be met:

- The vaccine must be FDA-authorized or FDA-licensed.
- The vaccination must be ordered and administered according to ACIP's standard immunization schedule.
- The licensed pharmacist must complete a practical training program of at least 20 hours that is approved by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE). This training program must include hands-on injection technique, clinical evaluation of indications and contraindications of vaccines, and the recognition and treatment of emergency reactions to vaccines.
- The licensed or registered pharmacy intern must complete a practical training program that is approved by the ACPE. This training program must include hands-on injection technique, clinical evaluation of indications and contraindications of vaccines, and the recognition and treatment of emergency reactions to vaccines.
- The licensed pharmacist and licensed or registered pharmacy intern must have a current certificate in basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
- The licensed pharmacist must complete a minimum of two hours of ACPE-approved, immunization-related continuing pharmacy education during each State licensing period.
- The licensed pharmacist must comply with recordkeeping and reporting requirements of the jurisdiction in which he or she administers vaccines, including informing the patient's primary-care provider when available, submitting the required immunization information to the State or local immunization information system (vaccine registry), complying with requirements with respect to reporting adverse events, and complying with requirements whereby the person administering a vaccine must review the vaccine registry or other vaccination records prior to administering a vaccine¹.
- The licensed pharmacist must inform his or her childhood-vaccination patients and the adult caregivers accompanying the children of the importance of a well-child visit with a pediatrician or other licensed primary-care provider and refer patients as appropriate.

Please visit the DC Health and CDC websites regularly for the most current COVID-19 information.

For resources and additional information on the District of Columbia Government's response to coronavirus (COVID-19), please visit coronavirus.dc.gov.

¹ District of Columbia Immunization Information System (DOCIIIS): <https://dchealth.dc.gov/dociis>