From: MDHHS-COVIDVaccineProviders
Subject: IMPORTANT UPDATE--Proper Disposal of COVID-19 Vaccine
Date: Tuesday, May 18, 2021 2:40:43 PM
Attachments: Memo - Secure disposal of vaccine vials and packaging recommendation (20210202) v2.pdf
Importance: High

This message was sent to AIM, FAB, Health Systems, INE, IAP, LHD Health Officers, LHD Medical Directors, MACI, MACI 2, PH Imms Leads, MCIR Region Contacts, COVID-19 Vaccine Providers, and Imms All Staff. I apologize for any duplications.

Hello Immunization Partners,

Recently it has come to the attention of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) that there is a national concern regarding COVID-19 vaccine not being disposed of properly, in particular the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. MDHHS has previously sent out an email about the proper disposal of COVID-19 vaccine but we felt it was important to share this information again.

Proper disposal of vaccines is everyone's responsibility. There may be times when disposal of COVID-19 vaccine vials will need to occur even if the vial or syringe is not empty. COVID-19 vaccine should not be placed back in the shipping box and sent back to the manufacturer. Also, COVID-19 vaccine liquid should not be removed before disposing of the COVID-19 vaccine dose. We have heard rumors of vaccine liquid being removed via syringe and then "squirted" down the sink drain. This should not happen. If vaccine is still left in the vial, it must be disposed of in the Biohazard/Sharps container.

Per the COVID-19 Vaccination Provider Agreement, providers should dispose of COVID-19 vaccine waste in accordance with local regulations and processes currently being used to dispose of regulated medical waste. Attached is a document from our partners with Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about concerns that have been raised at the federal level regarding the secure disposal of COVID-19 vaccine vials.

The document reviews the recommended actions suggested by the Department of Defense in relation to the increased threat of fake or counterfeit vaccines. It is recommended that vaccine administration sites dispose of wasted COVID-19 vaccines in accordance with their jurisdiction's procedures and take appropriate steps to properly dispose of empty vaccine vials and product packaging. Recommended actions to further protect COVID-19 vaccine empty vials and packaging are:

- Action 1 (**Preferred method**): Treat vials and packaging similarly to medical waste by placing in red sharps container; **OR**
- Action 2: Deface all or safely crush materials so it cannot be reintroduced or reproduced. After the products are sufficiently defaced, then dispose with regular waste.

If you have any questions, please let us know.

Thank you for all your hard work to protect Michiganders from vaccine-preventable diseases!

-The Immunization Nurse Education Team,
Andrea, Heidi, Maria, Sarah, and Terri

Please direct Coronavirus (COVID-19) related inquiries to the DHHS COVID-19 hotline at 1-888-535-6136. For the most up-to-date information, facts and FAQs, go to www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus.

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