The National Vaccine Advisory Committee (NVAC) Standards for Child and Adolescent Immunization Practices represent the most desirable immunization practices, which pediatricians should strive to achieve. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) endorses the NVAC Standards and encourages pediatricians to fully implement the recommendations. In an effort to address implementation challenges, the AAP Childhood Immunization Support Program collects best practices from pediatric offices and shares them for adoption in your office!

NVAC Standard #4 states that:

**Patient costs are minimized**

Out-of-pocket costs—including vaccine, administration, and office visit fees—should be as low as possible for all patients, and no child or adolescent should be denied vaccination because of inability to pay. Resources should be identified to keep patient vaccination costs as low as possible. Free vaccine is available through some public programs, although health care professionals who offer these vaccines may charge a reasonable administration fee. Sources of publicly funded vaccines include the Vaccines for Children Program (VFC), Public Health Service Section 317 grants to states, and state or local programs. Children and adolescents should be screened for their eligibility to receive vaccines through these programs. Vaccinations provided through VFC or Section 317 grants may not be denied because of an inability to pay the administration fee, and health care professionals should ensure that parents/guardians and patients are aware of this requirement (applies to all vaccines purchased using Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC] contracts, regardless of the setting—private or public—in which the vaccines are administered.)

To minimize costs for patients, health plans and insurance plans should include the provision and administration of all routinely recommended vaccines as a covered benefit for all children and adolescents. Furthermore, to minimize costs for health care professionals, purchasers and health plans should reimburse health care professionals adequately for delivering vaccines, including the time required for vaccine administration and for communication about the vaccine benefits and risks. The CDC maintains a web page about VFC at [http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/index.html).

**Pediatric Implementation Strategies:**

**Create Office Policies that Minimize Patient Costs**
- Consider accepting all forms of insurance, including Medicaid and CHIP.
- Accommodate changes in insurance for established patients.
- Become a practicing pediatrician in the VFC Program.

**Screen Patients for Eligibility in State Vaccine Programs**
- Identify children who may be eligible for VFC. If necessary, refer children to the health department.
- Refer children who may be eligible for Medicaid or CHIP coverage to the appropriate party for enrollment.
- Explore city-wide programs that may be run through the local health department or United Way. Some programs enroll eligible patients in Medicaid or CHIP, as well as offer vouchers for one doctor’s visit to those who do not qualify for other programs.
Work with Third Party Payers to Ensure Payment and Coverage of Vaccine

- Fill out the **AAP Hassle Factor Form** to report insurance administrative and claims processing concerns including settlement disputes that you may have filed.
- Develop an AAP Chapter Pediatric Council that can engage private payers at the state level in collaborative dialogue concerning pediatric issues. Several AAP chapters have developed pediatric councils that meet regularly with private payers at the state level to discuss pediatric issues related to access, coverage, and quality.

**Resources:**

**AAP**

- Efforts to Enhance Vaccine Payment Must Comply with Law
  [http://aapnews.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/26/9/40?ijkey=Ofb9w3pf9a5wE&keytype=ref&siteid=aapjournals](http://aapnews.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/26/9/40?ijkey=Ofb9w3pf9a5wE&keytype=ref&siteid=aapjournals)

- Immunization Coding Corner
  [http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/financing.html#Coding](http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/financing.html#Coding)

- Immunization in a Medical Home Training Tool
  [www.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/ImmunizationTrainingTool.ppt](http://www.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/ImmunizationTrainingTool.ppt)

- Immunization Training Guide
  [http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/training-guide.html](http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/training-guide.html)

- Parent Resources on Paying for Vaccines
  [http://www2.aap.org/immunization/families/faq/FAQ_PayingforVaccines.pdf](http://www2.aap.org/immunization/families/faq/FAQ_PayingforVaccines.pdf)

- Periodicity Schedule
  [http://brightfutures.aap.org/pdfs/AAP%20Bright%20Futures%20Periodicity%20Sched%20201107.pdf](http://brightfutures.aap.org/pdfs/AAP%20Bright%20Futures%20Periodicity%20Sched%20201107.pdf)

- Private Payer Advocacy Advisory Committee Resources. Available to AAP Members at:
  This page includes:
  - Waivers: The Basics for the Pediatric Office,
  - The Business Case for Vaccines,
  - Vaccine Addendum to Payer Contracts, and more!

- Recommended Childhood and Adolescent Immunization Schedule
  [http://www2.aap.org/immunization/IZSchedule.html](http://www2.aap.org/immunization/IZSchedule.html)

**Government**

- CDC Vaccine Supply Policy
  This page provides a list of universal, universal select, VFC/underinsured, VFC/underinsured select, and VFC only states.

- CDC Vaccine Price List
  [http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/cdc-vac-price-list.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/cdc-vac-price-list.htm)
  Lists vaccine prices for both the public and private sector with their NDC codes.

- Children’s Health Insurance Program
  [http://www.medicaid.gov/CHIP/CHIP-Program-Information.html](http://www.medicaid.gov/CHIP/CHIP-Program-Information.html)

- Vaccines for Children Information
Other installments in this series can be found on the Childhood Immunization Support Program Web site at:
http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/nvacstandards.html

Please send your ideas on cost-effective and sustainable practices to cispimmunize@aap.org.

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