

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2015 July 16

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## **VACCINE PREVENTABLE DISEASES STANDARD COMPLIANCE 2015-2016 - REVISED**

### **Recommendation**

*It is recommended that the Board of Health receive information about the following Vaccine Preventable Disease program changes:*

- *Assessment and suspension requirements under the Immunization of School Pupils Act will be prioritized for students 7 years and 17 years of age for the 2015-2016 school year.*
- *The Health Unit will plan for a two dose Human Papillomavirus Virus vaccine schedule per the recommendation from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, with a final decision to be made pending guidance from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.*

### **Key Points**

- MLHU was unable to assess students' immunization records and comply with ISPA in the 2014-2015 school year due to logistical challenges associated with Panorama implementation. These challenges will continue for the remainder of 2015 and into 2016, necessitating adaptations.
- The Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health has requested that ISPA be prioritized, and that staff be redeployed to address high-priority program areas. Adaptations recommended in this report will maintain program delivery and address the Ontario Public Health Standards requirements.
- Advances in vaccine research point toward a transition to a two-dose schedule for HPV

### **Background**

The Vaccine Preventable Diseases program was non-compliant with requirements to assess student records in the 2014-15 year, per [Report No. 021-15](#) re Panorama and Vaccine Preventable Diseases Standard Compliance at the March 2015 Board of Health meeting. This was a result of implementation of Panorama and revisions to the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) in 2014. Implementation of the provincial immunization database, Panorama, was initiated at MLHU at the end of July, 2014. The implementation created a backlog of data entry and duplicate records.

The Vaccine Preventable Disease (VPD) team has been working diligently on the back log of data entry, resolution of duplicate records and reconciliation of exemption affidavits (activities which need to be completed before records can be assessed according to ISPA). Additional funding has been requested from the Ministry to provide the staffing required to complete this work, although indications are that these resources are not forthcoming. Without additional resources, the VPD team is unlikely to be able to complete these activities and be in full compliance with ISPA. In addition, the ISPA was revised in July 2014, now requiring students to be immunized for three additional vaccines, and requiring additional doses for other vaccines already included in the legislation.

Health Units who implemented Panorama in 2013 and were able to assess and suspend students under the ISPA in the 2014-2015 school year reported that they had at least twice the number of notifications to parents, suspension notices and suspensions due to the additional requirements under the revised ISPA

and the one year absence of assessment and suspensions. For MLHU, this expected increase in notifications and suspensions in the absence of additional resources will have significant impact on workload. The additional workload also has an impact on school staff who work with families to obtain information and immunization and assist with the suspension process, and health care providers who administer vaccines.

Dr. David Mowat, Acting Chief Medical Officer of Health for Ontario, has asked that compliance with the ISPA be a priority for Health Units, although no additional funding is likely to be available. Dr. Mowat indicated that if health units are unable to meet other AA indicators due to redeployment of staff to assist with ISPA compliance, this rationale will be considered by MOHLTC.

Several health units are planning to move toward selective implementation of ISPA to cope with these pressures. MLHU plans to prioritize ISPA implementation for students who are 7 years of age and 17 years of age for the 2015-2016 school year. Screening immunization records at age 7 provides an opportunity to ensure children are protected at the school entry; screening records for 17 year olds ensures students leaving school are fully immunized.

### **Changes to HPV Schedule**

Health Units in Ontario currently offer a three dose series of publicly funded Gardasil (HPV) vaccine to Grade 8 female students in school-based immunization clinics. Three clinics are held in each elementary school throughout the school year to administer the vaccine.

Based on new evidence, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) now recommends that HPV vaccines may be administered as a two-dose series with equivalent effectiveness and a slight reduction in side effects. The Ministry is considering changing the official provincial program to a two dose schedule for school-based clinics. In the meantime, several Health Units including MLHU will be planning to implement NACI's recommendation, with a final decision pending guidance from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. In addition to providing better service for clients, this will contribute to the resources required for ISPA-related activities.

### **Next Steps**

Selective implementation of ISPA and to two-dose HPV are being planned for the 2015-2016 school year.

MLHU VPD program has been experiencing significant challenges associated with increased workload due to logistical challenges associated with Panorama implementation and recent additions to the vaccination requirements in ISPA. Prioritization of workload and staff redeployment to address high-priority program areas will help maintain program delivery and address the Ontario Public Health Standards requirements. This approach will allow time to resolve the challenges associated with Panorama implementation and adequately prepare student records for assessment.

This report was prepared by Ms. Marlene Price, Manager, Vaccine Preventable Diseases Team and Dr. Gayane Hovhannisyian, Associate Medical Officer of Health.



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<p><b>This report addresses</b> the following requirement(s) of the Ontario Public Health Standards: Vaccine Preventable Diseases Standard, requirement # 13.</p>
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