

Vermont Vaccine Purchasing Program - Immunization Funding Advisory Committee

April 10, 2018 – 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

103 South Main Street, Waterbury, Vermont

Presiding Officer: Dr. Josh Plavin, Chair

I. Attendance. Participating in all or part of the meeting in person (P) or by telephone (T) were the following individuals:

Committee Members

Josh Plavin (P)
Dave Stitt (T)
Nancy Hogue (P)
Susan Barrett (P)
Peggy Rupp (T)
Barbara Frankowski (T)
Carrie Phillips (P)

VDH

Christine Finley (P)
Amanda LaScala (P)
Brian O'Connor (P)
Paul Daley (P)
Anna Swenson (P)

KidsVax®

Fred L. Potter (P)
Timothy Chevalier (P)
Nicole Price (P)
Claire Roberge (T)
Matthew Miller (T)
Heather Veen (T)

Members of the Public

Jessica Aprile (T)
Neal Dwelley (T)
Lucie Garland (T)
Beth Ptak (T)
Dorothy Miller (T)

II. Summary of Actions Taken and/or Recommended

A. Actions Taken (votes adopted)

1. The Committee approved the minutes for the October 31, 2017 meeting.
2. The Committee recommended that the Commissioner reduce the assessment rate to \$.01 per child per month and \$.01 per adult per month beginning with the assessment collection due on August 15, 2018.
3. The Committee elected Dr. Plavin to serve as Chair for 2018.
4. The Committee set the next IFAC meeting date for October 30, 2018 at the Waterbury State Office Complex.

B. Follow up Task/Action Items

1. KidsVax® will draft a letter to the Commissioner with the Committee recommendations for the 2018 assessment rate.
2. VDH will forward the Committee recommendations to the Commissioner, and upon approval KidsVax® will publish to the website.
3. KidsVax® will draft a Notice of Assessment Rate change, send the Notice to payers and post on the website.
4. Mr. Chevalier to send a meeting invite to the Committee for the next IFAC meeting.
5. The Committee will evaluate options to encourage and enable Medicare to contribute to VVPP.
6. The Committee will evaluate benefits and options for providing adult flu vaccine through the Program.

III. Minutes

Welcome and Introductions - The meeting started at approximately 10:00 a.m. with introductions of those present and those participating by phone. Chair Plavin led the meeting. There were no new Committee members. There were no new topics from Committee members.

1 **Consent Items** – A quorum, having been established, Chair Plavin asked for approval of the minutes for the October 31,
2 2017 meeting.

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4 Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

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6 VOTED: To approve the Committee minutes of the October 31, 2017 meeting as presented.

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8 **Mid-Year Updates** – Ms. LaScala provided an update on vaccine usage for the period of October 1, 2017 through February
9 28, 2018. Vaccine distribution for this time, overall, was as expected. She provided the Committee with specific examples of
10 certain vaccines with higher or lower usage. The Shingrix vaccine will be distributed to providers starting May 1, 2018.

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12 Mr. Potter provided an update on enforcement efforts involving TRICARE. At the October 2017 Committee meeting, the
13 assessment setting worksheet included an anticipated recovery from TRICARE of \$785,867 based on the initial settlement
14 amount offered by TRICARE, with the understanding that the enforcement action was not yet complete, and the final
15 payment was likely to increase. VVPP is starting to see assessment payments from TRICARE plan providers. The recent
16 omnibus budget bill has provisions regarding the methodology required to determine assessment calculations to be used by
17 all entities participating in state universal vaccine purchase programs. The total arrearage payment from TRICARE will be
18 more than double their original offer.

19
20 **Strategic Discussion of VVPP's Financial Position and Goals** – Mr. Daley then reviewed his March 23, 2018
21 memorandum which showed the results of the Vermont Department of Health's Business Office's full review of VVPP's
22 revenues and expenses conducted for the year ending September 30, 2017. Based on his analysis of this review, he urged the
23 Committee to recommend an assessment holiday to the Commissioner of Health. The Program ended the year with a
24 significant unobligated balance. Mr. Daley explained some of the reasons for this surplus, including changes in CDC policies
25 and Program decisions based on available fiscal information and guidance from KidsVax. A discussion ensued based on the
26 information received from Mr. Daley on how best draw down the excess reserves. Based on this discussion, it was
27 recommended that the assessment rate be reduced to until cash reserves are more in line with the Program's needs. The
28 recommendation was to reduce the monthly assessment to one cent per covered life per month.

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30 The Committee next discussed this recommendation and the best way to implement these changes, including when to start,
31 what the new assessment rate should be, how to track the impact on future assessment rates, the impact of the anticipated
32 TRICARE payment, and the potential impact of this change on health insurers. The Committee considered reducing rates
33 with the payment due May 15th, but decided to delay implementation until the August 15th payment to allow time to notify
34 payers of the change.

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36 Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee unanimously

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38 VOTED: To provide the Commissioner of Health with the Committee's recommendation that the 2018
39 Assessment Rate for assessments due on August 15, 2018, November 15, 2018 and February 15, 2019
40 should be changed and reduced as follows:

	Annual Assessment	Per-Month Assessment
41		
42 1. Pediatric population assessment	\$ 0.12	\$0.01
43 2. Adult population assessment	\$ 0.12	\$0.01
44		

45 Mr. Potter reviewed a potential strategy to include Medicare as an insurer in responsible for assessments for vaccines
46 received by their beneficiaries. To address this challenge, the state of Alaska has asked Kidsvax[®] to initiate an effort, similar
47 to the TRICARE effort, that would allow state universal vaccine programs to receive payments for vaccines provided to
48 eligible Medicare beneficiaries 65 years and older in Vermont. Alaska would welcome Vermont's participation in this effort.
49 VVPP currently only covers individuals up to age 64, and this change might enable the Program to cover individuals older
50 than 64.

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52 This change could reduce cost and increase availability of vaccines for the population over 64. Given the recent legislative
53 success with TRICARE, this could be a good opportunity to pursue this matter. Discussion on this idea took place and
54 pursuing a possible Medicare Demonstration waiver at the state level was also raised. Chair Plavin stated that this is a topic to
55 consider further, including discussion with stakeholders and inclusion on the agenda at the next meeting.

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57 **IV. Discussion of Adult Vaccine Issues**

1 The flu vaccine is not currently offered to adults as part of VVPP. The Program is considering including this vaccine in the
2 future. Including the flu vaccine in the Program could reduce the cost to purchase the vaccine and the cost to provide the
3 vaccine, which could lead to increased availability and increased health benefits and economic benefits. Mr. O'Connor has
4 been researching the potential economic benefits of including adult flu in the Program. He discussed several slides explaining
5 his research into the costs of flu vaccine, the cost of treating the flu, and the health and economic benefits of increased flu
6 vaccination. The research suggests that increased vaccination against the flu will lead to economic benefits. He concluded
7 that inclusion of seasonal flu vaccine in VVPP is cost effective for Vermonters and Insurers.

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9 The Committee discussed details of how flu vaccine might be provided and the potential impacts of this change. It would be
10 helpful to obtain additional input from the Committee on details to consider in evaluating if, how, and when to make this
11 change.

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13 **New Matters** - Pursuant to the statutory requirement, the Committee voted for the Committee Chair. After seeking
14 nominations, a discussion regarding the position took place.

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16 Upon motion duly made and seconded, by unanimous vote, with 1 abstention from Dr. Plavin, it was

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18 VOTED: To elect Josh Plavin, MD, Vice President and Chief Medical Officer, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont
19 as Chair of the Immunization Funding Advisory Committee.

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21 The Committee selected October 30, 2018, from 10:00-12:00 for the next meeting. The meeting will be held at the Waterbury
22 State Complex.

23
24 **Public Comment** - Chairman Plavin opened the meeting for public comment at about 11:35 a.m. Hearing none, the meeting
25 adjourned by unanimous vote at 11:36 a.m.

26
27 A true record.

28 Attest,

29


30
31 Nicole G. Price
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