

ACTION MEMO #15-02

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Nutrition Services Directors

FROM: Debra Keyes MA, RD 
Director
Georgia WIC Program

DATE: March 6, 2015

SUBJECT: Immunizations/Measles Outbreak

Attached you will find a memo from USDA that provides important information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about the recent outbreak of measles. Please ensure that your staff are continuing to request and review immunization records during the certification appointment for all infants and children.

As an adjunct to health care, WIC's role is to ensure that infants and children at risk for under-immunization are referred for appropriate care. WIC staff is encouraged to continue partnering with local immunization programs to coordinate efforts to ensure that WIC children receive timely immunizations, and that parents and caregivers receive appropriate information about preventable diseases, such as measles. Additionally, the updated CDC resources have been added to the immunization resources page on the WIC Works Resource System at <http://wicworks.nal.usda.gov/topics-z/immunizations>.

If you have any questions regarding any information contained in this memo, please contact Sonia Jackson at (404) 657-2900 or email sonia.jackson@dph.ga.gov.

Attachment

c: Angela Hammond-Damon, IBCLC - Deputy Director, Operations & Nutrition Services
Sonia Jackson - Program Review and Delivery Manager
District Health Directors
District Program Managers
District Administrators
WIC Deputy Directors
WIC Managers
Ondray Jennings, Office of Inspector General





United States
Department of
Agriculture

FEB 24 2015

Food and
Nutrition
Service

3101 Park
Center Drive

Alexandria, VA
22302-1500

Dear WIC State Agency Director:

As part of our partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to coordinate immunization promotion efforts in WIC, I am sending you updated information to help increase awareness about measles among the WIC staff and participants.

The U.S. is currently experiencing a large, multi-State measles outbreak. From January 1 to February 6, 2015, 121 people from 17 States and the District of Columbia, have been reported as having contracted measles. The majority of cases are among unvaccinated people. This new outbreak of measles cases is a reminder about the importance of vaccination.

As an adjunct to health care, WIC's role is to ensure that infants and children at risk for under-immunization are referred for appropriate care. WIC played a crucial role during the last measles epidemic in the 1990s in helping to increase measles vaccination rates among WIC children. This disease was then declared eliminated from the U.S. in 2000, meaning that there was no continuous measles transmission for more than 12 months. Measles is still common in many parts of the world including some countries in Europe, Asia, the Pacific, and Africa. Travelers with measles continue to bring the disease into the U.S. Measles can spread when it reaches a community in the U.S. where groups of people are unvaccinated.

This is a good time to remind WIC local agencies of the importance of ensuring that WIC infants and children are up to date on their immunizations. Infants and young children are at high risk of getting a serious case of measles, and timely vaccination is the best way to prevent the disease. WIC local agencies are required to screen and refer infants and young children in accordance with **WIC Policy Memorandum #2001-7: Immunization Screening and Referral in WIC.**

Please continue to partner with State and local immunization programs to coordinate efforts to ensure that WIC children receive timely immunizations, and that parents and caregivers receive appropriate information about preventable diseases such as measles.

More information about measles is available on the CDC website:

-- Measles cases and outbreaks: <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/cases-outbreaks.html>

-- The multi-State outbreak linked to an amusement park in California:
<http://www.cdc.gov/measles/multi-state-outbreak.html>

WIC State Agency Director
Page 2

-- Educational materials: Measles Resources webpage

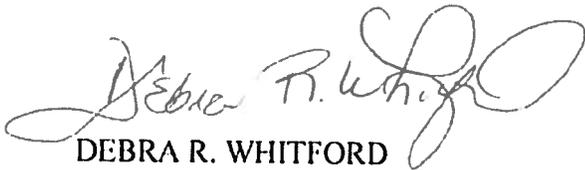
-- Guidance for parents: <http://www.cdc.gov/features/measles/>
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/measles/fs-parents.html>

-- Frequently Asked Questions about the vaccine:
<http://www.cdc.gov/measles/about/faqs.html>

-- Guidance for travelers: <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/hcp/index.html#immunity>

Thank you for continuing to be an important ally in the Nation's efforts to ensure that low-income infants and young children receive timely immunizations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debra R. Whitford". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

DEBRA R. WHITFORD
Director
Supplemental Food Programs Division