Pharmacists Immunizing Kids: What do I need to know?
Quick reference for pharmacists preparing to immunize children

A recent amendment to state law now allows pharmacists to administer vaccinations to patients aged six years and older. This step-by-step guide, prepared as a PSW member service, can be used by your pharmacy staff as you prepare to administer vaccines to children.

Section 3212q, 450.035 (2) of the statutes is amended to read:
450.035 (2) A pharmacist may not administer a vaccine unless he or she has successfully completed 12 hours in a course of study and training, approved by the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education or the board, in vaccination storage, protocols, administration technique, emergency procedures and record keeping and has satisfied the requirements specified in sub. (2t). A pharmacist may not administer a vaccine under this subsection to a person who is under the age of 18 6.

Requirements for Immunization
The statute that provided for change does not require the pharmacist to complete additional training. The requirements for a pharmacist to participate in an immunization program for ages 6 and older are the same as for adults.

- Completion of an ACPE accredited immunization course
- Immunization protocol with a physician
- Liability insurance no less than $1,000,000 for each occurrence and $2,000,000 for all occurrences in one policy year. (PSW has been advised by Pharmacists Mutual Insurance that no change in your personal liability insurance policy is needed to be covered when providing immunizations to children. Other insurance companies may have policy variations, so be sure to check with your insurance provider to determine if policy updates are needed.)

Updates to Immunization Protocols
- Your pharmacy immunization protocol may currently include language that restricts pharmacists from administering immunizations to patients under the age of 18. Each pharmacy must update their immunization protocol to reflect a change in administration age and the new protocol must be signed by a physician.
- PSW has developed an updated sample protocol that may be used as a template for protocol updates. Visit the PSW website to access the protocol.
- Pharmacists cannot legally administer vaccinations to children 6 years and older unless your pharmacy protocol has been updated and signed by a physician.

Modification of Emergency Procedures
- Your pharmacy may have to modify any written emergency procedures to include children 6 and older.
- It is highly recommended that emergency medication administration for children and adults be included in your immunization protocol and in your emergency procedures. Staff should be trained accordingly.
- Specific information on medical management of vaccine reactions in children and teens can be found at www.immunize.org.

Childhood Immunization Schedule
- Pharmacy staff should stay up to date on the most current immunization recommendations for children and adolescents.
- The 2011 Child and Adolescent Immunization and catch-up schedules can be accessed online through the PSW website.
Immunizations Requiring Multiple Doses

- Many childhood immunizations require multiple doses and have specific requirements for minimal intervals between doses.
- Detailed information on follow-up doses can be found in the childhood and adolescent dosing schedules.
- When planning to provide immunizations for children, it is important that your pharmacy develop a method to follow-up with patients who require additional vaccine doses. Reminder phone calls and letters can be helpful tools.
- Providing parents with a written vaccine record is recommended and this record can include recommendations for next doses. An example vaccination record can be found at http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2022.pdf.
- Your pharmacy should sign up for and participate in the Wisconsin Immunization Registry (see below) to electronically track patients’ immunization records and share them with other providers.

Wisconsin Immunization Registry

- The Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR) is a computerized, confidential electronic record that can be used as a tracking tool to 1) provide information to providers about a patient’s previous immunizations and 2) assist providers in keeping patients on schedule for their recommended immunizations.
- Pharmacists can use this registry to record immunizations, contraindications, and adverse reactions as well as check immunization status of patients.
- The system can also produce recall and reminder notices for vaccines that require multiple doses and can verify if doses have been given by other health care providers.
- Your pharmacy is highly encouraged to record all vaccinations with the WIR.
- WIR trainings are offered to providers and conducted throughout the state and no cost.
- To register for a WIR training session, contact: Matthew Verdon at 608-261-4948 or email Matthew.Verdon@wi.gov.

Annual Influenza Vaccine

- At first, your pharmacy may find it difficult to promote regular childhood immunization by a pharmacist. A great place to start promoting pharmacist immunization of children is with administration of an annual influenza vaccine.
- The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has the following influenza vaccination recommendations for children 6 years and older
  - Administer 0.5 mL of the trivalent inactivated influenza vaccine in the deltoid muscle. For children, a 22 – 25 gauge needle, 1 – 1 ½ inches should be used.
  - Administer 0.2 mL of the live activated influenza vaccine intranasally (0.1 mL in each nostril) as an alternative for otherwise healthy children (i.e., those who do not have underlying medical conditions that predispose them to influenza complications).
  - For children who are receiving the seasonal influenza vaccine for the first time and are younger than 9 years old, TWO doses, separated by at least 4 weeks, should be administered.