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To: Maine Immunization Program Providers  
From: Maine Immunization Program  
Subject: Facility Closures for COVID-19 Vaccine Storage and Handling Guidance  
Date: March 18, 2020

Considering the rapidly evolving situation around the COVID-19 pandemic, the Maine Immunization Program is reaching out to all Providers with recommendations related to facility closures and vaccine storage and handling which may be impacted by this pandemic.

**All on-site visits conducted by Maine Immunization Program staff will be suspended until further notice.**

During this time, to ensure proper storage and handling of state supplied vaccines, we are asking that providers please follow the guidance below in the event of a temporary office closure:

- **Review back-up emergency plans and have your protocols in place**
  - Vaccine should be transported to an alternate location where temperatures can be monitored regularly using a portable vaccine refrigerator/freezer or a qualified container and packouts.
  - If transport is not feasible and a digital data logger (DDL) is present that can store sufficient data for the closure, leave vaccine in current unit and mark "DO NOT USE".
    - Upon reopening, review all DDL data and take action on any temperature excursion, if any, before administering vaccine.
    - When reviewing DDL data it is important to check that complete data are available for all dates and times.
    - If the DDL ultimately did not have enough capacity to record during the period of closure or experienced failures, you will need to consult with the vaccine manufacturer to determine if the vaccine can be used or should be discarded.
  - For school clinics, if there is an end of school year or holiday protocol in place, please utilize it in the event of extended closure.
  
- **Prepare for Emergency Vaccine Transport**
  - Review MIP's Policy & Procedure Manual for instructions on properly transporting vaccines on pages 44 – 48.
  - You may also refer to the following "Packing Vaccines for Transport during Emergencies" document which includes visuals.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/storage/downloads/emergency-transport.pdf>
    - Please follow these instructions carefully to ensure safe transport of vaccine.

Should you have additional questions, please feel free to call the Maine Immunization Program at 207-287-3746.

Thank you for all that you do for the Maine Immunization Program and the children of Maine.