

USING BASIC VFC RECOMMENDATIONS TO REDUCE BALANCING ISSUES WITH VIM

- 1) **Clearly organize provider office refrigerators into VFC and non-VFC areas. Have one person in charge of organizing the supply of VFC vaccines to use, trying to organize so that only one lot number per vaccine is in use at a time.** That person is to be notified when the supply of that vaccine lot is getting low. The person in charge might want to keep a list of active lots by hand (The reason for this is that if an office is really off in balancing VIM, a Discoverer report can be run to see who possibly data-entered incorrectly with a wrong lot number and that person could be retrained).
- 2) Refrigerator/Freezer count - **Always have two people work together on the refrigerator/freezer count for greater accuracy and to avoid a need to recount later because of balancing issues.** Initially office staff will need to spend time on very carefully getting the VFC and private stock totally separated, then counted. Be sure to put the accurate refrigerator/freezer count into VIM. If an office should choose to skip the count when balancing and just put the same number into the balance worksheet as the computed balance, it soon becomes obvious in the inventory that the count was not really done correctly.
- 3) **Emphasize accurate and timely data entry.** If everything is entered correctly and all broken/not used/etc. are noted, provider offices will not be off (or far off) on their vaccine computed balances at the end of the month. Balancing is then greatly simplified! Entering shot data after balancing requires extra work in the inventory to make it balance. It is better to avoid this, but if necessary office staff can be trained to handle this issue in VIM so that it will not further complicate balancing.
- 4) Staff must be sure that they are **logged into the correct site if they work at multiple sites**, and never enter data into an incorrect site. The MCIR Site Administrator for an office can easily and quickly add and remove users as needed to avoid errors of this type.
- 5) **Carefully plan the amount of vaccine to order for both private and VFC stock to avoid running short on any antigens.** VIM allows offices to closely monitor vaccine inventories, expiration dates, and vaccine use to assure that provider offices order the right amount of vaccine and don't run short. (The LHD will monitor orders and may be needed to assist offices with planning the correct amount of vaccine to order.)
- 6) **Use private stock for any client with insurance (even if they think they might be underinsured).** Then the only "borrowed" vaccine, because of vaccine eligibility, that takes place should happen with returned EOB's that show the client was actually underinsured. The EOB's provide documentation of the vaccines that need to be replaced from VFC stock into private stock and can be used as a reference when periodically adjusting the inventory. Having one system for dealing with underinsured clients makes borrowing/replacing simpler.
- 7) There should be no transferring of VFC vaccine from one office to another (unless the LHD approves this in unique circumstances). The provider office should call the LHD if they are running short on a vaccine. Also, 'transferring in and out' from private to public stock or vice versa should be avoided unless no other options exist. The office must use the 'borrowed/replaced' function correctly if it is absolutely essential to borrow. **Avoid borrowing unless absolutely necessary** - rethink the amount of vaccine to order if the office is constantly running short on certain vaccines.
- 8) **Have a back-up person for the main VIM/vaccine person.** This was recommended initially and two people came to many of the trainings. This is necessary for times when the main VIM person is absent or leaves the office.
- 9) Provider offices having problems with VIM should balance as best they can right now, and start using the ideas presented above for the next cycle. **With careful, timely data entry of shot data, including wasted doses, and a minimum of borrowing, VIM is much simpler.**