

**Idaho Immunization Assessment Board
Organizational Meeting Minutes**

March 30, 2010

Department of Insurance

Board Members Present:

- Bill Deal - Director, DOI
- Ted Epperly, M.D. – Family Practice Residency
- Christine Hahn, M.D. – Department of Health & Welfare (DHW)
- Jack Myers – Blue Cross of Idaho (BCI)
- Richard Rainey, M.D. – Regence BlueShield of Idaho (RBSI)
- Sen. Melinda Smyser – Idaho Senate
- Rep. Jeff Thompson – Idaho House of Representatives
- Pat Armstrong – Idaho Sand and Gravel
- Josh Sears for Board Member Andy Fujimoto – AmeriBen/IEC Group

Others Present:

- Shad Priest – DOI
- Gina McBride – DOI
- Joan Krosch – DOI
- Eileen Mundorff – DOI
- Naoko Weigelt – DOI
- Sandy Metro - DOI

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 pm by Bill. All attendees introduced themselves.

Gina gave a short presentation on the immunization assessment board bill, House Bill 432 enacting new Chapter 60 of Title 41, effective February 1, 2010 with a sunset date of July 1, 2013, and companion House Bill 657, revising the definition of “carrier.” House Bill 430 on TPA licensing, also effective February 1, 2010, expands the definition of licensed/registered TPAs to include those entities in the immunization assessments. The DOI notified TPAs, multiple employer welfare arrangements and single employer self-funded plans about these law changes. Gina also explained current DOI methods to gather carrier data by surveys and annual statements.

Christine, Ted and Joan gave a background review on the need for and development of this legislation, based on New Hampshire model for immunization assessments and other funding. Ted reported there appears to be up to a \$7 million savings to the state with this legislation. Jack and Rich discussed insurer savings for reduced pricing through federal purchase and reduced confusion with dual inventories. There are issues to make certain all providers will participate because of prior 2009 funding confusion; provider contracts may need to address payment when vaccines are provided by state funding. Christine stated the law applies to Idaho resident children under 19, and if the guardian parent is an Idaho resident, but there can be a concern with children coming into Idaho from other states. Perhaps Idaho can work with border states on these issues.

Organizational Structure: The board organization was copied from the High Risk Pool (HRP) Board model, where the Board has authority to administer the program. At the next meeting with all members present, the Board must:

1. Elect officers for Board, and
2. Develop a plan of operation to do assessments.

Funding: DHW will need funding in hand by July 1, 2010, to prevent interruption to the vaccination program. Shad suggested the Board look into establishing a line of credit for immediate funding and to reconcile any shortfalls in collected assessments. The administrator for the HRP Board had set that up for HRP, or it could be a subcommittee task for this Board. Based on the code, carriers will have 60 days from the date of notice to pay the required assessment. Ideally the initial assessment should be sent by May 1, 2010, for July 1 funding. The DOI can enforce the assessment requirements. The initial assessment could be an estimated figure to establish the program, then adjusted later as needed. Annual assessments can be paid on a quarterly basis.

Eligibility for Assessments: Various board members expressed concerns on establishing specific definitions how to count who is covered for fair and accurate assessments. Christine and Gina will meet ASAP to compare data to make a recommendation how to count eligible children and carriers so carriers can provide accurate information. The simpler eligibility definition may be the best start, e.g. based on principal subscriber/member with an Idaho resident address, or number of individual member contracts, or number of insured lives (principal and dependent). Gina indicated it is a problem for the DOI to gather information on large groups, while the DOI has small employer and individual plan numbers based on current carrier health surveys and annual statements. The Board could develop its own survey to gather carrier information. Christine provided an estimate of 430,000 children in Idaho now, but the Board must determine how many meet the eligibility definition.

Covered Vaccines: The Board must determine which immunizations will be included in this program. There is a concern about Gardasil, the HPV vaccine that is not currently covered, and for flu vaccines where some providers have already pre-ordered flu vaccines. Christine provided current estimates of the number of children covered and costs of vaccines in the federal program, what Idaho currently uses as a vaccine list and the federal price list. Rich offered the Board should not expand current program, but continue the current vaccine program. Board members expressed concern if the Board must pick specific manufacturers and vaccines based on cost differences, and if the Board has authority to negotiate prices with manufacturers – or is it DHW's right to negotiate prices as DHW is doing the actual purchasing. DHW had planned to disband the Immunization Selection Committee. Members discussed the legislative intent and agreed the Board's duty should only be to handle assessments and not implement purchase choice policy. The Board may have right to require only the least expensive vaccines based on good stewardship as costs are controlled by Board, but the members agreed to start slowly and look at this later.

Assessment Process: The Board must develop a Plan of Operation explaining the process how to do assessments for vaccines. Joan explained the assessment process for the HRP plans as handled by an outside administrator, AmeriBen. Without an administrator, the DOI will take on a large workload to gather and process information and assessments. There are only 6 viable resident TPAs available.

Reporting to the Legislature: The legislature/Health Care Task Force must be kept informed of the progress of this program, especially as it nears the July 1, 2013, sunset date.

Tasks Assigned for Next Meeting:

1. Bill offered the DOI will develop a draft Plan of Operation for this Board based on the HRP Plan of Operation.

2. Bill asked Rich for RBSI & Jack for BCI to research and provide a draft of a fair basis for carrier assessments.
3. Joan will research the RFP process to bid for an administrator for the Immunization Board.
4. Bill will contact AmeriBen about costs and services performed for the HRP Board.
5. The DOI will send Board members sample copies of current carrier surveys.

Meeting adjourned at 3 pm.

Next meeting: 1 pm – 3 pm, Wednesday, April 21, 2010 at the Department of Insurance.