



MEMO

TO: Prevention Partnership Providers and
Local Public Health Units

FROM: Molly Sander, MPH *MS*
Immunization Program Manager

RE: State-Supplied Thermometers

DATE: November 14, 2011

As of January 1, 2012, the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) Immunization Program will no longer be supplying certified and calibrated minimum/maximum thermometers to Prevention Partnership providers for vaccine storage. Providers enrolled in the Vaccines For Children (VFC) Program are required to have certified and calibrated thermometers in all refrigerator and freezer compartments used for VFC and other publicly-funded vaccine storage in order to monitor temperatures. Providers must begin purchasing certified and calibrated thermometers for vaccine storage units. These thermometers must be in place as of January 1, 2012, or when NDDoH-supplied thermometers' calibration and certification expires.

Instead of purchasing new thermometers, providers may choose to recalibrate previously supplied NDDoH thermometers as needed. The blue sticker on the back of NDDoH-supplied thermometers lists the calibration expiration date and the contact information for the company. The current cost to recalibrate NDDoH-supplied thermometers is \$17.50 and an additional \$16.00 in shipping and handling.

All thermometers are calibrated as a part of the manufacturing process. The VFC Program requires a second calibration process that occurs after manufacturing, but before marketing, and is documented with a certificate that comes with the product. Each device is to be covered by a Certificate of Traceability and Calibration. The traceability declaration is to confirm that the measurement standards and instruments used during calibration of the product are traceable to an ISO/IEC 17025 accredited testing laboratory, to National Institutes of Standards and Technology (NIST) or to another internationally recognized standards agency.

Providers will be asked to produce certificates of calibration for each thermometer at the time of a VFC compliance site visit (annually or biennially). Expiration dates appear on certificates of calibration. Providers are responsible for ensuring that thermometers are recalibrated as needed based on expiration dates. Recalibration means the thermometer was tested and adjusted to keep its accuracy after purchase. Most manufacturers recommend recalibration every one or two years. Providers should contact the manufacturer of the thermometer for instructions regarding recalibration procedures.

Certified and calibrated thermometers are available in a variety of types including digital, bio-safe liquid, continuous and minimum/maximum. The NDDoH recommends providers use continuous tracking thermometers when possible. Regardless of the type of thermometer used, all providers are required to take temperatures in both freezer and refrigerator units twice daily, record the temperatures on a temperature log, notify the NDDoH if temperatures are out-of-range, submit copies of temperature logs monthly to the NDDoH and maintain the logs for at least three years.

Certified and calibrated thermometers are available from a variety of suppliers and manufacturers. Below is a chart giving a sample list of suppliers/manufacturers that currently offer certified and calibrated thermometers with valid documentation. The NDDoH does not recommend or endorse products or manufacturers. This list is a courtesy and is not inclusive of all manufacturers. Providers may purchase thermometers not manufactured by companies on this list but that also have certificates of calibration that meet program requirements. When choosing a certified and calibrated thermometer, be sure to consider the cost and frequency of required recalibration.

COMPANY	WEBSITE	PHONE
Fisher Scientific	www.fishersci.com	1-800-766-7000
DeltaTrak	www.deltatrak.com	1-800-962-6776
Control Solutions	www.vfcdataloggers.com	1-888-311-0636
Dickson	www.dicksondata.com	1-800-323-2448
Streck	www.streck.com	1-800-228-6090
Control Company	www.control3.com	1-281-482-1714

During fiscal year 2011, more than \$6 million worth of publicly-funded vaccine was supplied to North Dakota providers. It is extremely important to use certified and calibrated thermometers for vaccine storage to ensure viability of not only publicly-funded vaccine, but private vaccine also. Purchasing certified and calibrated thermometers is a small cost in comparison to the cost of vaccines.

Please see the North Dakota Vaccine Management Plan for additional information about vaccine storage and handling:

www.ndhealth.gov/Immunize/Documents/Providers/Forms/Management2011.pdf.

Please feel free to contact the NDDoH Immunization Program with any questions or concerns at 701.328.3386 or toll-free at 800.472.2180.