

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



Safe and Healthy Lives in Safe and Healthy Communities

**Proposed Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Immunization, Testing, and Health Screening
for Health Care Workers (R23-17-HCW)**
Community Review Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, 19 July 2006

Persons in Attendance: See attached sign-in sheets.

The meeting was convened at 1:10 p.m. by Donald C. Williams, Associate Director for Health Services Regulation, who provided introductions and an overview of the regulatory issues.

The following sections of the proposed health care worker regulations were discussed: 1.4; 1.7; 2.6; 3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4; 3.5; 3.7; and Appendix "A";

Some of the issues/suggestions raised by the group include the following:

- Regulations should be clarified so that it is clear that they pertain only to newly hired health care workers who shall be screened prior to starting work in a licensed health care facility;
- If a seasonal flu vaccine is required for all currently employed health care workers (not just those newly-hired), this requirement should be clarified to distinguish it from the rest of the regulations;
- For tuberculosis screening, the QuantiferON – TB Gold® test should be included in addition to the standard PPD test;
- Seasonal flu vaccine language should parallel the Joint Commission language that requires an annual evaluation of employee vaccination rates and reasons for non-participation among employees; the health care facility could then encourage participation in the vaccination program by employees;
- Who will pay for the additional vaccines required? Who will pay for the cost of the immunizations if the health insurers do not pay?
- If flu vaccination is required, a statement should be inserted indicating that the requirement is supply-dependent (for years when supply is limited);
- If flu vaccination is required, religious and philosophical exemptions should be inserted in addition to the standard language related to medical contraindications;
- A variance section should be inserted;
- The "frequently asked questions" (FAQs) that circulated with these regulations previously should be updated and re-circulated;
- Will there be liability for the state in the event of adverse events related to the vaccinations?

Mr. Williams indicated that all of the issues raised by the group related to these proposed regulations would go back to staff, including the Director of Health for further discussion, review, and re-drafting. A public hearing will be scheduled for sometime in the early Fall 2006.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Shelov, MPH, MSSW
Health Policy Analyst
Office of Health Services Regulation
August 11, 2006