



DEFENSE  
HEALTH AGENCY

## OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE HEALTH AFFAIRS

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### Defense Health Agency-Immunization Healthcare Branch National Vaccine Advisory Committee Update - February 2016

- **2015-2016 Department of Defense (DoD) Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Program:** The influenza vaccine is mandatory for all uniformed personnel including Active Duty, Coast Guard, Reserve and National Guard, with an immunization goal of 90% compliance by mid-December. Influenza vaccination is also mandatory for health care personnel who provide direct patient care in military treatment facilities, and is recommended for all other health care personnel in the military healthcare system. As of 15 December 2015, 90% of the total force had received an annual influenza vaccine and as of 15 January 2016 the vaccination rate increased to 93%. Vaccinations will continue within DoD until June.
- **Department of Defense (DoD) Educational Training during 2015-2016 Influenza Season:** In DoD military and civilian healthcare providers are required to complete influenza training prior to administering the vaccine. The Defense Health Agency-Immunization Healthcare Branch developed an on-line influenza training course, consisting of 5-modules and quiz. An Influenza Cold Chain Management on-line training course was also developed for medical logistic and pharmacy personnel. As of 25 January 2016, 23,223 healthcare providers completed the influenza training, and 6,131 medical logistic personnel and pharmacists completed the Cold Chain Management training.
- **Temperature Sensitive Medical Product (TSMP) Compromise Project:** In 2013, DoD released a standardized process for reporting potential TSMP Vaccine Compromises. The reporting requirements were consolidated into an extensive worksheet that allows the medical logistics personnel to analyze the potential loss, provide documented disposition, and track losses, loss types, locations, and products. The information has allowed a continual refinement of current educational products and policy changes, which in 2015 resulted in a recommendation for a storage change for MMR vaccine. After an analysis of over 300 TSMP events, it was recommended by the Defense Health Agency-Immunization Healthcare Branch that the MMR or the MMRV vaccine should be stored in the freezer, instead of the refrigerator. The ongoing data collection allows DoD to target areas of high risk and work to mitigate vaccine loss due to improper storage and handling.
- **Vaccine Hesitancy Subcommittee Working Group Update:** The Defense Health Agency-Immunization Healthcare Branch Regional Office at Womack Army Medical Center, Fort Bragg, NC, is developing a 4- to 6-hour curriculum on the immune system and the benefits of immunization to combat vaccine hesitancy that will be piloted in local DoD schools. Potential exists for expansion of the program if it is well accepted. The Regional Office has also worked with Army Community Services (ACS) at Ft. Bragg to establish a referral system for vaccine-hesitant parents, in which the Immunization Healthcare Branch Regional Office will provide further counseling on immunizations. They will also give briefings and answer questions about childhood immunizations at ACS's new parenting classes.