To: Chiefs of Obstetrics-Gynecology, Chiefs of Pediatrics, Chiefs of Family Medicine, Birth Registrars, Maternal/Child Nurse Managers and Labor/Delivery Nurse Managers at Birth Hospitals

From: Pejman Talebian, MA, MPH, Director, Immunization Program

Date: May 20, 2015

Subject: Notification about the Discontinued Distribution of the Lifetime Health and Vaccination Record (Blue Book)

PLEASE SHARE WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Immunization Program has decided to discontinue the production of the Massachusetts Lifetime Health and Vaccination Record also known as the Blue Book. The Program has found that the Blue Book is no longer utilized as it has been in the past due to the proliferation of Electronic Health Records (EHR) and the ability to track vital health information through other means. Please be aware that there will be a gradual phase-out to accommodate recent orders, notify applicable parties, and ensure questions are answered.

Despite the elimination of the Blue Books, it remains a priority of the Immunization Program to ensure that vaccine administration data is shared with those with a need to know; most notably, parents and the medical home. There are several methods to ensure immunization records are being shared appropriately:
1. As many of you know, the Immunization Program has been rolling out the statewide immunization registry, the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS). The submission of immunization information to the MIIS is required by law. For birth hospitals, the submission of data for the administration of the birth dose of hepatitis B into the MIIS allows for access to the record by the medical home, and is the starting point for a complete, consolidated immunization record across provider sites. Recent regulations outlined a compliance schedule for providers to report immunization information to the MIIS. The MIIS has an Immunization Certificate that can be printed and given to parents for their records.

2. Many birth hospitals are printing out a copy of the immunization record from the newborn electronic health record and giving it to the parents to take to their child’s health care provider. In addition, the Immunization Program suggests faxing the record directly to the pediatrician/family care physician to ensure that the health care provider receives the information.

3. The Immunization Action Coalition has examples of other paper forms you may wish to use to document vaccine administration and give to parents/other health care providers. There is a lifetime immunization record as well as a specific child and teen immunization record. Both of these records can be ordered from Immunization Action Coalition here.

During the Transition from Distribution of the Blue Book:

1. Notify staff that the Blue Book will be discontinued so they can plan accordingly.
2. Use up your inventory of Blue Books, but do not place orders for future supply.
3. Develop a plan to ensure your facility is submitting immunization information to the MIIS and sharing information with parents and the child’s medical home.

For more information about the MIIS, please visit our website at www.mass.gov/dph/miis, email the MIIS help desk at miishelpdesk@state.ma.us, or call (617) 983-4335.

If you have any specific questions about the discontinuation of the Blue Book, please contact Rebecca Vanucci, Immunization Outreach Coordinator, at (617) 983-6534 or email at Rebecca.Vanucci@state.ma.us.

We appreciate your cooperation and commitment to ensuring a healthy, vaccinated community.