



Cowlitz County Health Department

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News Release

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Health Department to Close Immunization Clinic

Beginning August 3, 2010, the Cowlitz County Health Department will close their weekly immunization clinic. The Health Department has previously offered immunizations on a walk-in basis on Tuesday afternoons, accounting for about 1% of the total annual childhood immunizations given in Cowlitz County.

“The focus of public health is shifting from serving individuals one at a time to providing services to the community as a whole,” said Brian Underhill, the County’s Immunization Program Manager.

Clinical Services Manager Hilary Gillette-Walch explains: “Giving vaccinations without offering full medical services essentially undermines the medical home model in which the individual receives complete care in a clinical setting. Providing routine immunizations outside of the medical home is costly, fragments care, and does not provide individuals with the quality health care that they deserve.”

Gillette-Walch states, “Staff time and resources can be re-directed toward public health needs of the community as a whole.” The Health Department will continue to work with local providers to ensure that patients have a medical home that provides full medical care.

The Health Department will still provide vaccines during times of disease outbreak and in other emergencies.

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