

Alaska Public Health Advisory

December 4, 2013

Change in State-Supplied Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Policy

REMINDER

As of January 1, 2014, the Section of Epidemiology will no longer supply rabies post-exposure prophylaxis. Epidemiologists will continue to be available 24/7 to assist health care providers in managing possible rabies exposure situations. Pasted below is the letter that was sent to pharmacy and medical staff in Alaska hospitals earlier this year.

July 9, 2013

Effective **January 1, 2014**, the Alaska Section of Epidemiology (SOE) Infectious Disease Program will no longer provide rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) to health care providers and facilities. An Epidemiology *Bulletin* was released describing distribution of PEP during 2008-2012 and announcing this new policy change. The Bulletin is available at: http://www.epi.alaska.gov/bulletins/docs/b2013_19.pdf. This letter is a courtesy notification directed to the facilities to which SOE has supplied PEP in the past.

For decades, SOE has provided rabies PEP free of charge to the public as part of a comprehensive rabies control program, which has helped ensure that patients received PEP only when warranted. While centralized distribution of PEP is efficient, it is also costly--a full PEP series for a 175-lb adult costs ~\$3000, not including shipping, personnel, or administration costs. For immunocompetent persons not previously vaccinated against rabies, PEP consists of a single dose of human rabies immune globulin (HRIG) given on a per weight basis and four doses of vaccine given over a 2-week period.

SOE's 24/7 commitment to consult on animal exposures and coordinate rabies testing has resulted in efficient use of PEP. This commitment continues; however, SOE can no longer afford to supply rabies PEP. Therefore, as of **January 1, 2014**, health care providers and hospitals will need to ensure that they either stock PEP for emergencies, or that they are able to obtain PEP from a supplier of their choice in a reasonable time frame.

Current manufacturers of human rabies vaccine include Sanofi-Pasteur (Imovax®) and Novartis (RabAvert™). HRIG is manufactured by Sanofi Pasteur (Imogam™) and Grifols (HyperRAB®). Manufacturer websites are listed below; many distributors may also be a source for products.

Sanofi Pasteur: <http://www.sanofipasteur.us/websites/professionals>

Novartis: http://www.novartisvaccines.com/us/portfolio/us_portfolio.shtml

Grifols: http://www.grifolsusa.com/en/web/eeuu/bioscience/-/product/hyperrabb_s_d_rabies_immune-globulin

Assistance Programs for Uninsured/Underinsured Patients: http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/medical_care/programs.html

Any questions regarding these changes can be directed to the Section of Epidemiology, Infectious Disease Program at 907-269-8000 during work hours, or 800-478-0084 after hours.