

VACCINES FOR ALASKANS: ALASKA VACCINE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

INFORMATIONAL WORKSHOP ON
PROPOSED REGULATIONS FOR
AS 18.09 / CH 30 SLA 2014 / SB 169
DECEMBER 16, 2014



Jill Lewis
Deputy Director
Alaska Division of Public Health

AGENDA

- Welcome & Introductions
- Background
 - Vaccine Financing History
 - Alaska's Solution: SB 169
- Implementation
 - Plan of Operation
 - Regulations
- Public Comments
- Next Steps

WELCOME

“Sticky-notes”
will give you a
reference in
the Plan of
Operation

This is an informational workshop to gather public input on proposed regulations and the Plan of Operation for the Alaska Vaccine Assessment Program.

- Please submit your questions in the Chat box.
- All phone lines will be muted.
- This webinar is being recorded and will be posted on akvaccine.org and www.epi.hss.state.ak.us

PANELISTS

- **ALASKA SECTION OF EPIDEMIOLOGY**
 - Joe McLaughlin MD, MPH
 - Rosalyn Singleton MD
 - Gerri Yett RN, MSN, CHES
- **ALASKA DIVISION OF INSURANCE**
 - Katie Campbell
- **KIDSVAX.ORG**
 - Fred Potter
 - Julia Walter
 - Margaret Lane

GLOSSARY

See Plan of
Operation
Exhibit G

- **317** – a federal immunization funding program
- **AS** – Alaska Statute
- **AVAP** – Alaska Vaccine Assessment Program
- **CH 30 SLA 2014** – Chapter 30 of the 2014 Session Laws of Alaska
- **Commissioner** – DHSS Commissioner
- **Covered lives** - the number of Alaska residents covered under a health insurance plan provided or administered by a health insurer.
- **DHSS** – Department of Health and Social Services
- **HB 310** – House Bill 310, passed by the 27th Legislature
- **Plan** – AVAP Plan of Operation
- **Payer** – an entity that pays the vaccine assessment
- **SB 169** – Senate Bill 169, passed by the 28th Legislature
- **Universal Select** – when most but not all of the recommended vaccines are provided
- **VacTrAK** - DHSS Immunization Information System
- **VFC** – Vaccines for Children, a federal immunization funding program for eligible Medicaid, tribal and uninsured children

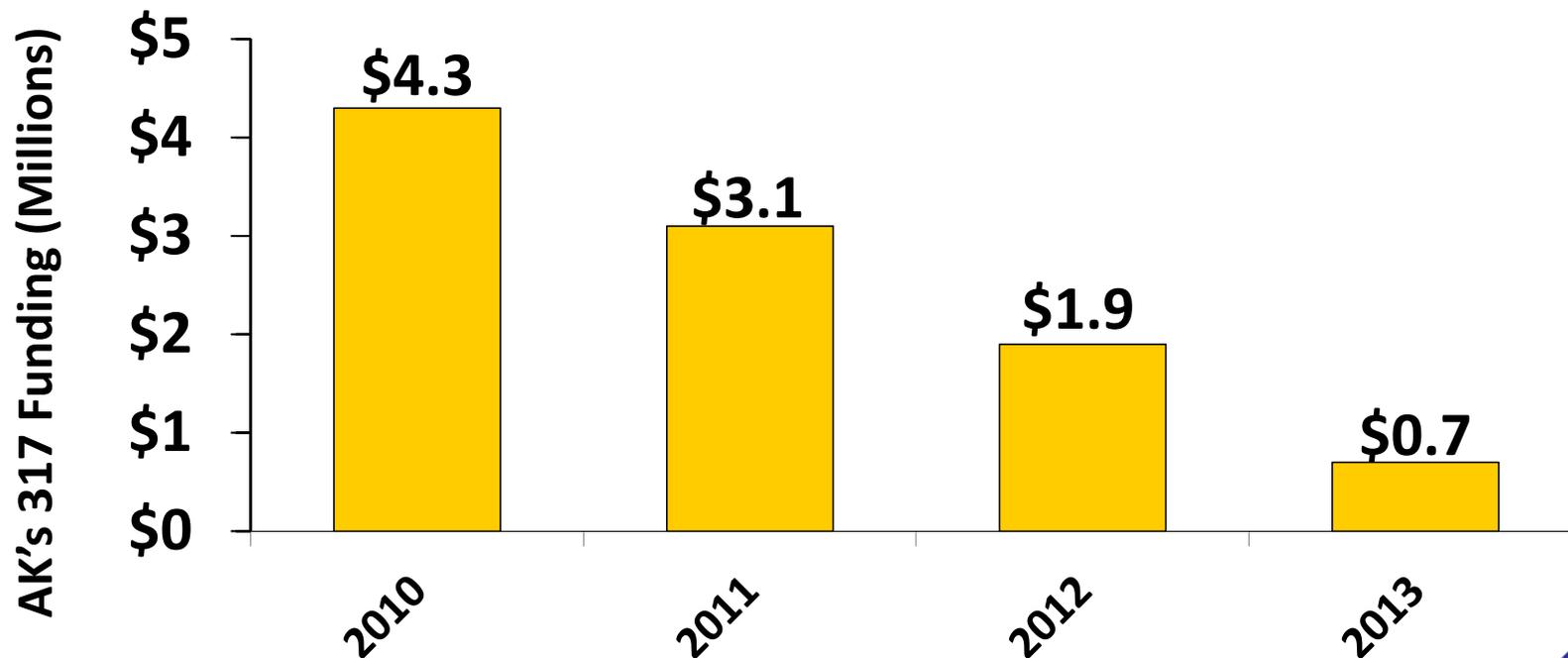
BACKGROUND

VACCINE FINANCING HISTORY

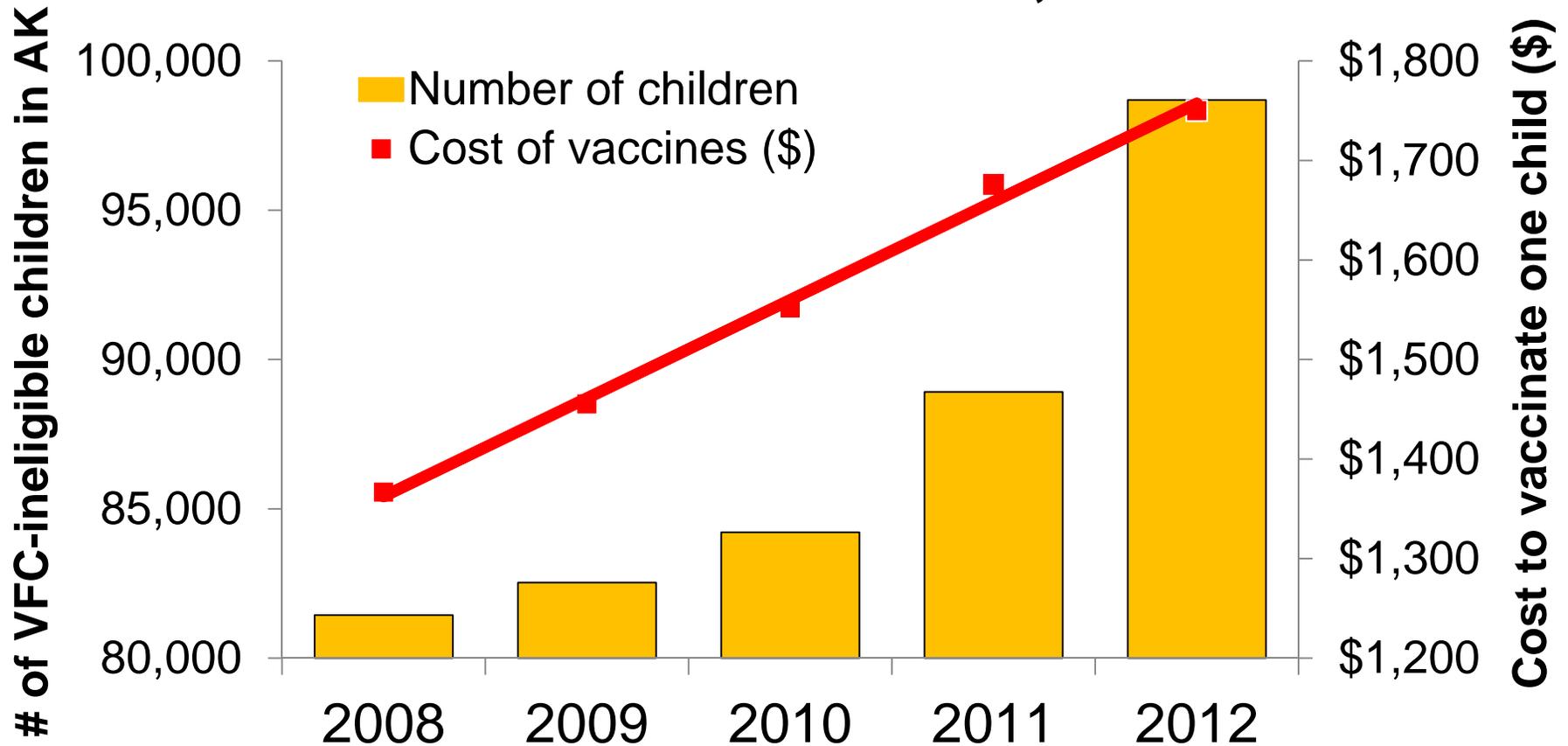
- **The Alaska Immunization Program provided universal vaccine coverage for over 30 years**
- **In 2009, Alaska became “universal select” due to rising costs, changing demographics, and reduced federal funding**

VACCINE FINANCING HISTORY

- Decline in state-supplied vaccine availability occurred after 2010 due to decreased federal Section 317 Program funds



Number of VFC-Ineligible Children and Estimated Cost of Recommended Vaccines for One Child from 0–18 Years — Alaska, 2008–2012



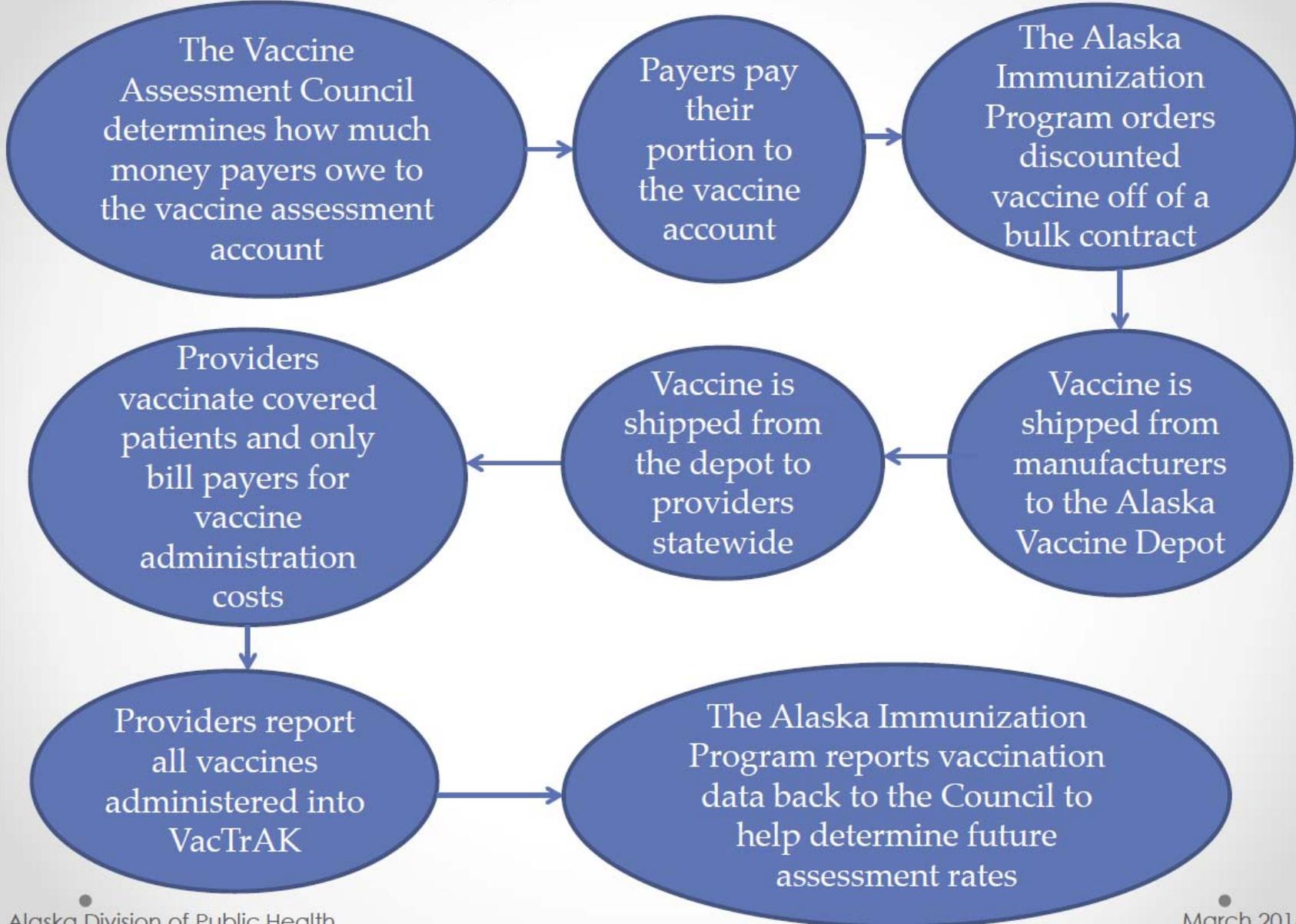
VACCINE FINANCING HISTORY

- In FY 2013, state funds were added
 - \$700 thousand/year in the annual operating budget
 - \$4.5 million/year temporary funding for 3-years for select vaccines for children and adults with no other vaccine coverage (HB 310)
- A long-term vaccine financing solution was needed to restore access

ALASKA'S SOLUTION: ALASKA VACCINE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

- **SB 169 created the *Alaska Vaccine Assessment Program* in AS 18.09 (CH 30 SLA 2014)**
- **Effective January 1, 2015 with a 3 year phase-in**
- **For adults and children**
- **Health insurers and other payers are assessed for their share of total vaccine costs and cost of operating program**
- **Creates Vaccine Assessment Account – funds do not lapse & seed money comes from remaining HB 310 funds**
- **Governed by a council appointed by the DHSS commissioner**
- **9 other states have similar assessment programs**

SB169 Statewide Immunization Program



IMPLEMENTATION

Plan of Operation

“Sticky-notes” will give you a reference in the Plan of Operation

AS 18.09.210(f)

- The Council shall establish and implement a plan of operation for the assessment, payments, overpayments, and data collection following Year-1 (The initial year is established by the commissioner).

PROPOSED REGULATION

- Majority of program policy will be in the Alaska Vaccine Assessment Program (“AVAP”) Plan of Operation
- The Plan will be adopted in regulations by reference.
- Updated annually and approved by the Council.

Links to the final draft Plan of Operation are in the Public Notice on the AVAP website.

Plan of Operation

See Plan of
Operation
page 3

- A. Meeting Calendar
- B. Financial Accountability Schedule
- C. Assessment Collection Schedule and Revenue Recognition
- D. Purchasing Program Fund Management
- E. Assessment Calculation Worksheet
- F. Alaska Vaccine Assessment Program Budget
- G. Definitions
- H. Scope of Program
- I. Assessed Entities
- J. Enforcement
- K. Evaluation
- L. Assessment Reporting and Payment Errors Policy
- M. Assessable Entity Opt-Out Procedures
- N. Provider Opt-In Procedures

Notice of assessment

See Plan of Operation Exhibit D

AS 18.09.200(b)(4)

- The commissioner will notify assessable entities and other program participants of the annual vaccine assessment for each vaccine included in the program.

PROPOSED REGULATION

- DHSS will notify payers of the assessment rate in December following procedures in the Plan of Operation.



Reimbursement for vaccine not distributed by AVAP

See Plan of Operation Exhibit H

AS 18.09.225(b)

- Payers may not deny a claim for vaccines not distributed under the program.

3 AAC 26.110

- Standards for prompt, fair and equitable settlements of health claims

PROPOSED REGULATION

- Providers have a grace period of 2 months to use up existing stock
- Insurers must reimburse a provider at a minimum of the 80th percentile of billed charges unless the insurer has an agreement with the provider to reimburse at a different rate.
- Considering whether to include an amendment to 3 AAC 26.110 to specifically address reimbursements to non-participating providers.

Phase-in assessable entities

Plan of
Operation
Exhibit H & I

AS 18.09.200(b)(1)

- The commissioner shall establish a procedure to phase in the program over a three year period that provides for participation by an assessable entity.

PROPOSED REGULATION

- All assessable entities (“Payers”) are included starting in January 1, 2015 unless they opt out.
- Payers register & supply initial covered lives and contact information by November 15, 2014.
- Payers update registration every year by August 15 using a form provided by DHSS per the Plan of Operation.
- All Payers register whether they are participating or not.

Enforcement

See Plan of Operation Exhibit J

AS 18.09.240

- A Payer that fails to pay a vaccine assessment or provide information may be assessed a noncompliance fee under regulations adopted by the department

PROPOSED REGULATION

- Non-compliance fee
- Automatic late payment fee & interest charged
- Commissioner can waive some or all of the fees.
- Similar to enforcement in other states.

Questions or Comments?

Part 1

- Please submit your questions in the Chat box.
- Questions and responses will be posted after the webinar on akvaccine.org and www.epi.hss.state.ak.us.

Assessable entity opt-out

See Plan of
Operation
Exhibit M

AS 18.09.220(e)

- An assessable entity may opt out of the program during the three-year phase-in period under procedures approved by the commissioner.

PROPOSED REGULATION

- Payers may opt out of the assessment annually (for 3 years) by completing a form at the time of registration following procedures in the Plan.
- Third party administrators will obtain the informed consent of each client if they opt out using a form provided by the department following procedures in the Plan.

Overpayments

See Plan of
Operation
Exhibit D & L

18.09.200 (b)(5) &
18.09.210(f)(1)(e)

- The commissioner shall devise a method for crediting overpayments.
- The council shall devise a system for reducing surplus payments by crediting past overpayments to current year assessments.

PROPOSED REGULATION

- Overpayments will be calculated annually following procedures in the Plan.
- Overpayments will be credited to the Payers by deducting it from the next assessment in the aggregate rate.
- Overpayments for Payers that opt out of the next assessment cycle will not be refunded.

Appeals

AS 18.09.220(d)

- A payer may appeal a vaccine assessment within 10 days after receiving notification. The commissioner shall review the appeal and modify the assessment if substantial evidence of an error is found.

PROPOSED REGULATION

- Appeals on the basis of substantial evidence of error only.
- Appeals of the assessment rate or list of included vaccines must be submitted to the commissioner in writing within 10 days of being posted to the AVAP website.
- Appeals of an individual Payer's bill must be made within 10 days of it being received.
- The commissioner's decision will be the final agency action.

Enrolling providers receiving AVAP vaccine

See Plan of Operation Exhibit H

AS 18.09.200

- AVAP vaccine is distributed to providers approved by the commissioner who agree to terms consistent with the program and state and federal law.

PROPOSED REGULATION

- Providers will be automatically enrolled to receive AVAP vaccine when they complete the routine annual Alaska Vaccine Distribution Program and VacTrAK renewal or enrollment process.
- All health care providers are required to report all vaccines administered per 7 AAC 27.650.

Provider opt-in for uninsured patients

See Plan of Operation Exhibit N

AS 18.09.225(a)

- Health care providers may opt in to pay an assessment if approved by the commissioner under regulations adopted by the department.

PROPOSED REGULATION

- Providers may opt-in to pay an assessment to receive state-supplied vaccine for uninsured patients (i.e. no other entity is paying the assessment)
- Providers who opt-in will be surveyed for their counts of uninsured covered lives
- Providers who opt-in will make quarterly payments

Vaccine Assessment Council

AS 18.09.210

- The council consists of 8 members appointed by the commissioner:
- 3 payers
- 2 providers
- 1 tribal/public
- 1 Div. of Insurance
- 1 DHSS (chair)

PROPOSED REGULATION

- Council members representing payers must participate in AVAP to pay assessments.
- Council members representing providers must participate in AVAP to receive AVAP vaccine.
- Non-attendance of council meetings is grounds for removal.

Definitions

AS 18.09.990(3)

- New definitions added for clarification

PROPOSED REGULATION

- **Substantial evidence of error** - Clearly erroneous error
- **State resident**: physically present in Alaska
- **Public health insurance plan**: same meaning as given in AS 21.54.500.
- **Tribal health**: same meaning as given in AS 21.54.500.

Questions or Comments?

Part 2

- Please submit your questions in the Chat.
- Questions and responses will be posted after the webinar on akvaccine.org and www.epi.hss.state.ak.us.

NEXT STEPS

NEXT STEPS: REGULATIONS PROCESS

- ✓ Informational workshop on proposed regulations and final draft Plan of Operations on December 16, 2014
- ❑ Final Plan of Operations posted online by December 31, 2014
- ❑ Initial legal review & consultation by Dept. of Law of preliminary draft regulations
- ❑ 30-day public comment period on preliminary draft regulations
- ❑ DHSS considers comments and makes revisions to regulations
- ❑ Commissioner adopts final draft regulations
- ❑ Final legal review and consultation by Dept. of Law of final draft regulations
- ❑ Lt. Governor files final regulations
- ❑ Regulations become effective 30 days after filing date

NEXT STEPS: IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Target Dates	Activity
October - December	Payer and provider teleconferences and training
November	Council members appointed
November 15	Payer online survey of covered lives due
November – December	Providers serving uninsured can opt-in
December	Year-1 payer assessment rate announced
January	Provider online annual enrollment for the State Distribution Program in VacTrAK
January	Providers begin ordering vaccine through Alaska Immunization Program
January	Council starts meeting
February 15	Year-1 payer assessments due for 1 st quarter

RESOURCES

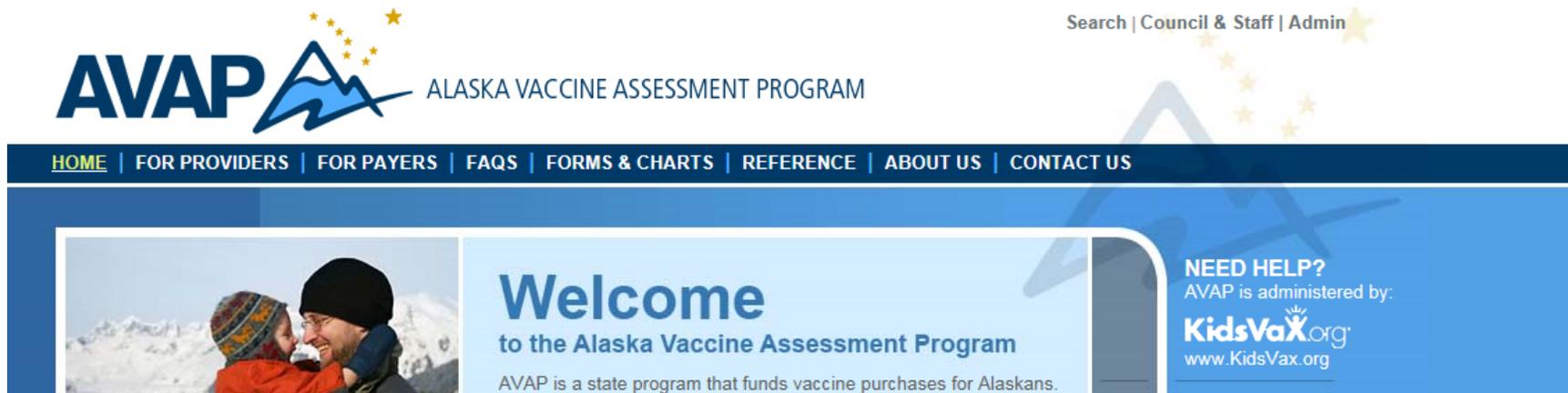
- **Public Notices**
 - <http://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices>
- **Vaccine Assessment Website (KidsVax.org)**
 - www.AKvaccine.org
- **Vaccine Assessment Spotlight (FAQs, bulletins)**
 - <http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/id/iz/default.htm#spotlight>
- **Alaska Immunization Program**
 - Immunization Helpline
 - Phone: 269-8088 (in Anchorage) or 888-430-4321 (toll free)
 - Email: immune@alaska.gov
 - Immunization Program Website
www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/id/immune.stm

RESOURCES

www.AKvaccine.org

- KidsVax.org website
- Provides a platform for payers to be assessed for their covered lives
- Provides up-to-date information for payers and providers

help@AKvaccine.org



The screenshot shows the AVAP website homepage. At the top left is the AVAP logo, which includes a stylized mountain range and the text "ALASKA VACCINE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM". To the right of the logo is a navigation menu with links for "Search", "Council & Staff", and "Admin". Below the logo is a dark blue navigation bar with links for "HOME", "FOR PROVIDERS", "FOR PAYERS", "FAQS", "FORMS & CHARTS", "REFERENCE", "ABOUT US", and "CONTACT US". The main content area features a large blue banner with a photograph of a man and a child in winter gear. The text on the banner reads "Welcome to the Alaska Vaccine Assessment Program" and "AVAP is a state program that funds vaccine purchases for Alaskans." To the right of the banner is a "NEED HELP?" section that states "AVAP is administered by: KidsVax.org" and provides the website "www.KidsVax.org".

MORE QUESTIONS? MORE COMMENTS?

- **Alaska Immunization Program**
 - Immunization Helpline
 - Phone: 269-8088 (in Anchorage)
or 888-430-4321 (toll free)
 - Email: immune@alaska.gov

THANK YOU!