2006-2007 Influenza Season

A pediatric perspective
Background from a brief AAP survey

- Most pediatricians report using FluZone vaccine because of the licensing for younger age groups.
- Pediatricians reported difficulties with the FluZone prebooking process:
  - 78% reported being able to order through prebooking; 12% were placed on a waitlist; 10% could not order and were not placed on a waitlist.
Background from a brief AAP survey

- VFC influenza supply was also problematic in a number of states
Background from a brief AAP survey

• By October 15
  - 56% of pediatricians had received no VFC influenza vaccine
  - 24% had received no private stock
  - 62% had received less than 25% of private stock
Background from a brief AAP survey

• By November 15
  - 32% of pediatricians received 75% or more of their VFC stock
    • 36% of pediatricians still had less than 25% of their VFC stock
  - 48% of pediatricians received 75% or more of their private stock
    • 19% still had less than 25% of their private stock
Pediatricians’ Concerns

• Messaging was problematic
  - CDC and manufacturers said plenty of vaccine was available
  - Parents and older children could get their vaccine at the pharmacy
  - Pediatricians got blamed for not ordering properly
Pediatricians’ Concerns

- Advertising
  - Past materials say October is the beginning of influenza season
  - Parents are used to bringing children to pediatricians beginning in October
  - Flu clinics and other appointments had to be rescheduled in large numbers
  - Parents don’t want to bring children to the doctor during the holiday season
Pediatricians’ Concerns

• The cost
  – Staff spent hours on the phone figuring out when vaccine would be available and then rescheduling patients
  – Many pediatricians were left with thousands of unused doses at the end of the season
    • Parents took their children elsewhere when the vaccine was not available
Pediatricians’ Concerns

- Pharmacies
  - Pharmacies and large retail-based clinics appeared to get vaccine before pediatric offices
  - It was likely from a different manufacturer, but parents do not make the distinction
  - Pharmacies and retail-based clinics have larger ordering capacity and appear to take priority over solo practitioners
Suggestions

- Manufacturers need to communicate with pediatricians and the AAP early and often
- AAP and CDC should work on tailoring messages to pediatricians about pediatric-specific supply
- Refine messages about when influenza vaccine is beneficial for children
Suggestions

• Discuss ways to use or compensate for leftover doses at the end of the season
• Children should be vaccinated in the medical home. Manufacturers should prioritize delivery to pediatric offices before retail locations