

Idaho Immunization Assessment Board: History, Benefits and Results

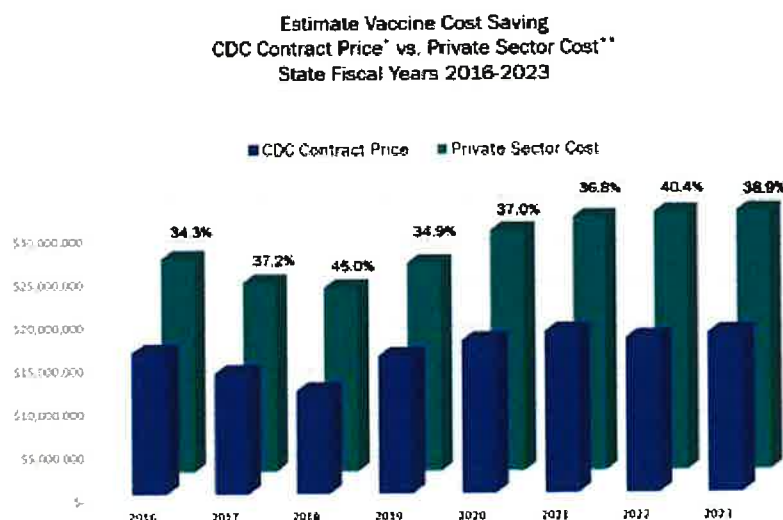
History

The federal Vaccines for Children (VFC) program was established by Congress in 1994 through the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993. Section 1928 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. §1396S) to increase access to vaccination for children who might not get vaccinated because of financial barriers. The VFC program allows states access to discounted vaccine costs for these children.

When the original program was implemented in the 1990s, Idaho's legislation provided state general funds to purchase vaccine for all Idaho children not already covered by the VFC program. This allowed healthcare providers to maintain a single stock of vaccines for all their pediatric patients. During the Great Recession of 2009, the general fund appropriation for childhood vaccines was eliminated. The Governor tasked those with interest in maintaining a universal vaccine program to come up with a solution maintaining access to vaccines for all children. In 2010, the Idaho State Legislature adopted Idaho Code, Chapter 60, Title 41, entitled "Immunization Assessments" which created the Idaho Immunization Assessment Board. **The purpose of the Board is to approve an annual per-covered child assessment fee from health insurance carriers and self-funded plan sponsors to fund a dedicated vaccine purchasing program.** The program does not require any child to be vaccinated.

Results

Between state fiscal year 2016 and 2023, purchasing vaccines for Idaho children through the CDC vaccine contracts saved Idaho approximately \$79,411,040 in vaccine costs, which is an average savings of 38% annually. The graph below displays the CDC contract price (blue) paid by the Idaho Immunization Program to cover assessment-eligible children versus the estimated private sector price (jade) for the same vaccines. In addition, the estimated percent of savings is displayed for each year.



- * CDC Contract Price is the price paid by the Idaho Immunization Program to purchase vaccine; payment information from the state-generated 9300 reports
- **Private Sector Cost is the cost listed on the CDC Vaccine Price Lists for each of the corresponding SFYs and vaccines as of April 1 of each year

Program Highlights:

- In simplified terms, the program is a purchasing cooperative that allows vaccines for children ages newborn through age 18 to be purchased at the largest public discount available. A copy of a recent analysis of the savings (38% and about \$8M/year) is attached.
- The Immunization Assessment Board is designed to establish an annual assessment amount and collect funds from insurance entities (carriers and self-funded groups)
- The Immunization Assessment Board does not require or mandate any vaccines. Vaccines purchased by the program are voluntarily obtained by families.
- With the exception of some very limited administrative support from the Department of Insurance and the Department of Health&Welfare, the Immunization Assessment Board does not use any state funds.
- The program saves the state of Idaho benefit plan an estimated minimum of \$500,000 annually.
- Without the program, physicians and pharmacists would be required to have two sets of vaccines, one for the Medicaid population (at the discounted rate) and one for all other. This would require dual storage units.
- Without the program it is likely the smallest and rural clinics would likely no longer offer vaccines, making it harder for Idahoans living in rural areas who desire vaccination to access those for their children.