

CITY OF BALTIMORE

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Health Department Announces Awards for Best Immunization Practice

BALTIMORE, MD – (April 28, 2009) – The Baltimore City Health Department hosted the sixth Annual "Best Immunization Practice" awards for seven pediatric healthcare practices.

The seven practices that received the awards were: Family Health Centers of Baltimore on Calvert Street; Goodtime Pediatrics on Moravia Road; Ralph Brown, MD; Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center - Center for Addiction and Pregnancy; Johns Hopkins Health - Harriet Lane Primary Care Center; Total Health Care - Mondawmin Mall Health Center and Saratoga Health Center.

Selection criteria included: vaccination coverage rates for young children and adolescents; early adoption of new adolescent vaccines (Tdap, HPV, and meningococcal vaccines); compliance with the Centers for Disease Control's "Standards for Child and Adolescent Immunization"; and compliance in reporting vaccinations to the Baltimore Immunization Registry Program.

“Vaccines have the ability to prevent life threatening illnesses,” said Interim Commissioner of Health Olivia Farrow. “But, for them to be effective, it is critical that the whole family is protected through vaccination, not just babies.”

Whooping cough is easily passed from person to person. The cough may last 100 days; the disease can lead to hospitalization or death. Influenza or "flu" gives people a fever, muscle aches, and cough. Each year 36,000 Americans die and 226,000 are hospitalized due to influenza infection. There are more than 12,000 new cases of cervical cancer each year; most are due to infection with the human papilloma virus (HPV). Meningococcal meningitis kills 5-15% of its victims; an additional 10-20% suffer brain damage or other serious complications.

“Vaccines guard against these threats by creating a circle of protection for vaccinated family members,” said Dr. Anne Bailowitz, Health Department Medical Director.

To learn more about vaccines and how to get them, contact your doctor or the Health Department's Bureau of Immunization at 410-396-4454 or www.baltimorehealth.org.

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