

State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

For immediate release
January 11, 2005

Contact: Kay Bird
827-2275, 690-2983 (cell)

First Lady Barbara Richardson Announces Beginning of Immunization Registry

Registry will track records, improve rates

(Albuquerque) – First Lady Barbara Richardson announced further steps to improving immunization rates around New Mexico as part of Governor Richardson’s “Year of the Child” agenda. Today the State is rolling out its new Statewide Immunization Information System. The registry will help medical providers track patients’ records and improve New Mexico’s immunization rates.

“We have made tremendous progress in protecting our children from vaccine-preventable diseases,” said First Lady Barbara Richardson. “The statewide registry will make it easier for medical providers to ensure there are no missed opportunities in providing necessary vaccines to their patients.”

The immunization registry is a partnership between the Department of Health and Human Services Department. Gov. Bill Richardson signed the Immunization Act in 2004, which authorized the creation of the registry.

The registry will be rolled out in two phases. In the first phase, 10 health-care providers around the state will be trained to use the system. During this time, the State will refine the system and input 10 years of historical Medicaid data and 8 million shot records.

Phase two allows access to the program to all health care providers and will begin in the spring. The State expects that medical providers will add an additional 1 million shots into the system each year.

“The collaboration between our two departments has made it possible to develop and fund a system that will help us achieve even higher immunization rates,” said Health Secretary Michelle Lujan Grisham.

Villa Therese Clinic, which has piloted the registry, found that the range of information available –vaccination status, reminders of the intervals between doses and reminders of expiration dates -- reinforced the clinic’s efforts and reduced mistakes.

“The families that we serve tend to change phone numbers and living situations often because of economic struggles, so immediate access to information helps us stay in touch and get them the services they need in a timely manner,” said Leah Steimel, executive director of Villa Therese Clinic.

###