Testimony
Health and Human Services Committee
Wednesday, June 16, 2010
North Dakota Department of Health

Good afternoon, Chairman Weisz and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Laura Olson, and I am the PROtect ND Kids business manager for the North Dakota Department of Health.

The committee has asked the Department of Health for information about the Immunization Program Study. I will provide information concerning the processing of the electronic member-liable claims, the use of contingent general fund appropriations in Senate Bill 2333, and the use of funding from the general fund for the immunization system for the 2007-09 and 2009-11 bienniums. Dr. William Riley and Mr. Jerry Nye will discuss the independent quality improvement evaluation of the state's immunization program, and Molly Sander will provide information about the use of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funding appropriated in Senate Bill 2333.

Processing of Member-Liable Claims

As you may recall from previous testimony in March, there was discussion about the use of electronic claims transfer between BCBS and the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences (UND) for member-liable claims. The project to process member-liable claims is steadily moving forward and billing is proceeding. Currently, UND has processed claims through mid-April. UND has provided additional hours temporarily for their part-time staff to assist in claims-processing activities. Since the last committee meeting, UND has significantly reduced the number of claims that are outstanding. UND has estimated that any remaining outstanding claims will be up-to-date by the end of June. The outstanding claims from October and November have been processed, the issues of reprocessing have been identified, and the reprogramming for this type of adjustment is being reviewed for purposes of providing a long-term solution.

Use of General Funds 2007-2009 and 2009-2011

During the 2007 – 2009 biennium, House Bill 1435 provided $2,000,000 in general funds for use in the childhood immunization program. The majority of these funds were expended on payments to local public health units and for the purchase of vaccine.

The 2009 – 2011 biennium provides $1,200,000 through Senate Bill 2333 to local public health units for providing immunization services statewide, according to a funding formula established by the State Health Council in consultation with local public health units. Expenditures to date include reimbursement of shortfalls experienced by local public health units in covering the cost of immunizations provided in current programs. These reimbursements are not otherwise provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funding.

The following tables show the breakdown of expenditures.

General Fund – Immunization Program

HB1435 Funding (July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2009)	**$2,000,000**
Media	$65,480
Travel	$1,393
BCBS – electronic member-liable claims with UND	$79,895
UND	$32,430
Vaccine	$993,250
Health unit payments	$820,355
Total Expenditures	**$1,992,803**
Unexpended	$7,197

SB2333 Funding (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2011)	**$1,200,000**
Health unit payments	$205,682
Total Expenditures	**$205,682**

This concludes my portion of the testimony. I am happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Independent Quality Improvement Study on Immunization

Next, Dr. William Riley and Mr. Jerry Nye will provide an update on the independent quality improvement study on immunization. Dr. Riley, an expert in quality improvement in public health, is associate dean of the School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota and has been retained to complete this study. Working with Dr. Riley is Jerry Nye of Riley and Associates. They will provide an overview of study activity to date, as well as information about the interest of pharmacists in providing immunizations to children.