

February XX, 2008

Draft

Dale L. Morse, MD, ACIP Chairman
Larry K. Pickering, MD, ACIP Executive Secretary
ACIP Members and Liaisons
1600 Clifton Road, NE
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Members of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), Liaisons, and concerned others:

We, the undersigned organizations representing public health, private providers, advocacy and educational groups, and persons affected by disease, urge you to move forward in 2007 with recommendations for universal childhood vaccination against influenza to include all children and teens through age 18 years. Too many Americans remain vulnerable to the serious effects of influenza disease because current vaccine recommendations do not go far enough.

We strongly support an immediate recommendation for routine influenza vaccination of school-aged children through 18 years of age. Targeted vaccination strategies in children are falling well short of goals. In the 2004-05 influenza season, more than half of children aged 6 months to 23 months did not receive vaccine.¹ Among children aged 5 to 17 years who were household contacts of high-risk persons, only 10.8% were vaccinated.²

Vaccinating children against influenza reduces the spread of influenza in households and communities, and helps protect those at high risk of influenza complications from acquiring the disease. Vaccination of school children in Japan provided protection and reduced mortality from influenza in older persons.³ Recent school-based vaccination efforts in the United States have lowered influenza-like symptoms and outcomes in households where children were vaccinated.⁴

Vaccine production capacity has increased greatly over the last several years, with three manufacturers producing vaccine for use in children and at least two additional childhood products pending approval and licensure by the Food and Drug Administration. It is critical that this production be sustained and increased through continued expansion of the childhood recommendations.

A universal recommendation for routine annual influenza vaccination for all persons through age 18 years would simplify the current targeted recommendations, sustain and build manufacturing capacity, and provide benefits to individuals by reducing morbidity and mortality, providing herd immunity protection, and enhancing vaccine access.

Preliminary findings from discussions with public health and healthcare opinion leaders conducted by Emory University found support for universal influenza vaccination in school-aged children.⁵ Public and private sector infrastructure supported the expansion of routine influenza vaccination to children aged 6 to 59 months as supply of the vaccine increased and will continue to expand to support a recommendation for school-aged children.

All of us acknowledge that, for several years following the publication of a universal childhood influenza vaccination recommendation, it is unlikely that we will achieve high vaccination levels of children and teens for a number of reasons, including insufficient supplies and difficulties in accessing all school-age children in a clinic setting during influenza vaccination season. The ACIP recommendations should certainly reflect that fact. However, we believe it is essential to move forward with the goal of universal vaccination for children now, so that vaccination rates have an opportunity to rise and protect our nation's population over the next several years. The sooner we begin, the sooner we will have a better-protected population.

You have an opportunity to protect children against a serious disease, while at the same time protect their communities and households from the spread of disease and support the continued growth of our nation's vaccine manufacturing capacity. We urge you to bring a universal influenza vaccination recommendation for school-age children through 18 years of age before the full ACIP for a vote at the next ACIP meeting.

All the undersigned organizations support universal vaccination for all school-age children and teens through age 18 years.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing

American Academy of Physician Assistants

American Association of Occupational Health Nurses, Inc.

American College Health Association

American College of Nurse-Midwives

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians

American College of Preventive Medicine

American Hospital Association

American Immunization Registry Association
American Lung Association
American Medical Association
American Nurses Association
American Osteopathic Association
American Pharmacists Association
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
The Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC)
Association of Immunization Managers
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
Every Child By Two
Families Fighting Flu, Inc.
Flu Busters
GetAFluShot.com
Healthy Solutions, Inc.
Hepatitis B Foundation
Immunization Action Coalition
Maxim Health Systems
Meningitis Angels
Migrant Clinicians Network
National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors
National Association of Community Health Centers, Inc.
National Association of County & City Health Officials
National Association of Local Boards of Health

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP)

National Association of School Nurses

National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition

National Hispanic Medical Association

National Medical Association

National Meningitis Association

National Network of Immunization Nurses and Associates (NNINA)

National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable

Nurse Practitioner Healthcare Foundation

Passport Health

PKIDS (Parents of Kids with Infectious Diseases)

Prevention MD

Society for Adolescent Medicine

Society of Teachers of Family Medicine

**Vaccine Education Center
The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia**

Visiting Nurse Associations of America (VNAA)

State or Local Organizations

Adair County Public Health, Iowa

Adult Immunization Coalition of Central Ohio

Adult Immunization Coalition of Tompkins County, New York

Alaska Diabetes Prevention and Control Program

Allen County Combined Health District, Ohio

Alliance City Health Department, Ohio

American Academy of Pediatrics, Wisconsin Chapter

American Lung Association of Metropolitan Chicago, Illinois

Arizona Association of Community Health Centers

The Arizona Partnership for Immunization

Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department, Texas

Bay Clinic, Inc., Hilo, Hawaii

Berks Visiting Nurse Association, Pennsylvania

Boyle County Health Department, Kentucky

Brown County Health Department, Wisconsin

Bucks County Immunization Coalition, Pennsylvania

Burnett County Department of Health, Human Services, and Aging, Wisconsin

Calhoun County Department of Health, Iowa

Calumet County Health Department and Home Health Care/Hospice Agency, Wisconsin

Catholic Charities, Chicago, Illinois

Cedar County Public Health, Iowa

The Center for Biosecurity of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Baltimore, Maryland

Central Michigan District Health Department

Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health, Iowa

ChesPenn Health Services, Pennsylvania

Chester County Immunization Coalition, Pennsylvania

Chicago Area Immunization Campaign, Illinois

Clallam County Department of Health & Human Services, Washington

Clark County Public Health, Washington

Clay County Public Health, Minnesota

Clayton County Visiting Nurse Association, Iowa

CMC-Myers Park Pediatric Clinic, Charlotte, North Carolina

Coastal Georgia Immunization Coalition, Brunswick, Georgia

College of the Sequoias, Visalia, California

Colorado Influenza and Pneumococcal Alert Coalition

Colorado Wellness Connection, LLC, Littleton, CO
Columbia County Department of Health, New York
Columbus Public Health, Ohio
Community Health Partners, Orange City, Iowa
Community Health Services of Marion County, Iowa
Connecticut Influenza and Pneumococcal Coalition
The Consortium for Healthy & Immunized Communities, Inc., Ohio
Cumberland Valley District Health Department, Kentucky
Cuyahoga County Board of Health, Ohio
Dallas Family Medicine, LLC, Dallas, Oregon
Danbury Visiting Nurse Association, Connecticut
Dane County Immunization Coalition, Inc., Wisconsin
Detroit Medical Center, Michigan
District Health Department # 2, Michigan
DuPage County Health Department, Illinois
East Texas Community Health Services, Inc., Nacogdoches, Texas
Eastern Shore Rural Health System, Nassawadox, Virginia
Essex Metro Immunization Coalition, New Jersey
Evanston Health Department, Illinois
Every Child By 2 of St. Joseph County, Indiana
Everybody Counts Immunization Coalition, Savannah, Georgia
The Family Medical Group, Cincinnati, Ohio
Farrell Pediatrics, Vienna, Virginia
Ford-Iroquois Public Health Department, Illinois
Franklin County Board of Health, Ohio
Gallia County Health Department, Ohio
Garland Health Department, Texas
Garrard County Health Department, Kentucky

Grand Forks Public Health Department, North Dakota
Greater Grand Forks Immunization Coalition, North Dakota
Greater Lehigh Valley Visiting Nurse Association, Pennsylvania
Greater Salt Lake Immunization Coalition, Utah
Hackley Health, Muskegon, Michigan
Hackley Visiting Nurse Services & Hospice, Inc., Muskegon, Michigan
Halifax County Health Department, North Carolina
Hawaii Immunization Coalition
Health Partners, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Hertford County Public Health Authority, North Carolina
Hillsborough County Health Department, Florida
Home Health Care Management, Pennsylvania
Howard County Health Department, Indiana
Indiana Immunization Coalition
Immunization Coalition of Delaware
Immunization Coalition of Summit County, Ohio
Immunization Coalition of Washington, DC
Immunization Partnership of Alameda County, California
Immunization Task Force - Metro Omaha, Nebraska
International Travel Medicine, Tulsa, Oklahoma
Iowa Immunization Coalition
Iron County Health Department, Missouri
Jefferson County Health Department, Missouri
Jefferson County Health Department, Ohio
Jeffersonville Pediatrics, Jeffersonville, Indiana
Jewish Child Care Association, Pleasantville, NY
Johnson County Public Health, Iowa

Kaiser Permanente Northern California, Walnut Creek, California
Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services, Michigan
Kalihi-Palama Health Center, Honolulu, Hawaii
Kearney Clinic, Kearney, Nebraska
Kenosha Immunization Coalition, Wisconsin
Kenosha Visiting Nurse Association, Inc., Wisconsin
Kent County Health Department, Michigan
Kentucky School Nurse Association
Labette County Health Department, Kansas
Langlade County Immunization Coalition, Wisconsin
Larimer County Immunization Coalition, Colorado
LifeCare Alliance, Columbus, Ohio
John C. Lincoln Community Health Services, Phoenix, AZ
Lincoln Trail District Health Department, Kentucky
Louisiana Health Care Review
Madison County Public Health, Montana
Maniilaq Public Health Nursing, Alaska
Marion County Health Department, Indianapolis
Marion County Health Department, West Virginia
Maryland Partnership for Prevention, Inc.
McDonald County Health Department, Missouri
McLeod County Public Health, Minnesota
Meagher County Health Department, Montana
Michigan Academy of Family Physicians
Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioners
Michigan Health & Hospital Association
Michigan Primary Care Association, Lansing, Michigan
Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department, West Virginia

Mile Hi Immunizations - Denver, Colorado
Minnesota Coalition for Adult Immunization
Monroe-Randolph Bi-County Health Department, Illinois
Montgomery County Health Department, Pennsylvania
Montgomery County Immunization Coalition, Pennsylvania
Mountain Park Health Centers, Phoenix, Arizona
MPRO, Michigan's Quality Improvement Organization
Neighborhood Pediatrics, P.C., West Hempstead, New York
Ness County Health Department, Kansas
New Mexico Immunization Coalition
North Willow Grove Pediatrics, Willow Grove, Pennsylvania
Northeast Wisconsin Immunization Coalition
Northern Manhattan Start Right Coalition, New York
Northern Nevada Immunization Coalition
Norwell Visiting Nurse Association, Inc., Massachusetts
Nursing & Home Care and Affiliates, Wilton, Connecticut
Ohio Association of Community Health Centers, Columbus, Ohio
Okaloosa County Health Department, Florida
Oklahoma County Immunization Coalition
Oregon Partnership to Immunize Children (OPIC)
Palm Beach County Immunization Coalition, Florida
Passport Health - California
Passport Health - Colorado
Passport Health of Southeast Wisconsin
Passport Health, Tampa, Florida
Pediatric Alliance-Southwestern Division, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania Immunization Coalition

Pettis County Health Center, Sedalia, Missouri

Philadelphia Health Management Corporation (PHMC)/Healthcare for the Homeless, Pennsylvania

Philadelphia Immunization Coalition (PIC), Pennsylvania

Physicians Health Plan of Northern Indiana, Inc.

PMDA, Pennsylvania's Association for Long-Term Care Medicine, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Price County Health Department, Wisconsin

Project LOVE, Columbus, Ohio

Public Health Dayton & Montgomery County, Ohio

Putnam County Health Department, Florida

Queen City Physicians, Cincinnati, Ohio

Randolph-Elkins Health Department, West Virginia

Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association, Connecticut

Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice, Vermont

St. Croix-Pierce Immunization Coalition, Wisconsin

St Joseph County Health Department, Indiana

St. Paul-Ramsey County Department of Public Health, Minnesota

Salina-Saline County Health Department, Kansas

Saline County Health Department, Missouri

San Diego Immunization Initiative (I-3), California

Sarasota County Health Department, Florida

Scotland County Health Department, North Carolina

Scotts Bluff County Health Department, Nebraska

Seminole County Health Department, Florida

SHOTS, etc., Nashville, Tennessee

Somerset School District, Wisconsin

South Shore Rehabilitation and Skilled Care Center, Rockland, Massachusetts

Southern Nevada Immunization Coalition
Summit County Health Department, Utah
Texas Medical Association, Austin, Texas
Tompkins County Health Department, New York
Tri-County Immunization Coalition, Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina
Trinity Visiting Nurse & Homecare Association, Moline, Illinois
Tulsa Area Immunization Coalition, Oklahoma
Two Rivers Public Health Department, Nebraska
United American Indian Involvement, Los Angeles, California
University of Wisconsin Immunization Task Force, Madison, Wisconsin
Vaccinate Alaska Coalition (VAC)
Vermilion County Health Department, Illinois
Visiting Nurse Association Health Services, Port Huron, Michigan
Visiting Nurse Association of Pottstown & Vicinity, Pennsylvania
Visiting Nurse Association-St. Louis, Missouri
Visiting Nurse Association of Western Michigan
Visiting Nurses Association of Greater New Orleans, Inc., Louisiana
Visiting Nurse Service, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana
Visiting Nurse Services of Michigan
Visiting Nurse Services of Newport and Bristol Counties, Rhode Island
Vista Community Clinic, Vista, California
Walla Walla County Health Department, Washington
Warren County Health Services, Iowa
Warren County Health Services, New York
Washington County Immunization Coalition-West Bend, Wisconsin
Washington Pediatrics, Washington, North Carolina

Washtenaw County Public Health Department, Michigan

Washtenaw Immunization Action Coalition, Michigan

West Haven Health Department, Connecticut

Wharton County Immunization Coalition, Texas

Whitman County Health Department, Washington

Wilkes County Health Department, North Carolina

Wilkin County Public Health, Minnesota

Will County Health Department, Illinois

Worth County Public Health, Iowa

Wright County Public Health, Minnesota

Yates County Public Health, Penn Yan, NY

Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Immunization Coalition, Alaska

^{1,2} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Estimates of influenza vaccination target population sizes in 2006 and recent vaccine uptake levels. Access at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>, December 6, 2006.

³ Reichert TA, Sugaya N, Fedson DS, Glezen WP, et al. The Japanese experience with vaccinating schoolchildren against influenza. *Vaccine*. 2005;23:1284-1293.

⁴ King JC, Stoddard JJ, Gaglani MJ, Moore KA, et al. Effectiveness of school-based influenza vaccination. *N Engl J Med*. 2006;355:2523-32.

⁵ Orenstein WA, Protzel-Berman P. Universal Influenza Vaccination in the United States: Are We Ready? Association of Immunization Managers/CDC Program Managers Meeting presentation, December 8, 2006.