



**Statewide Advisory Commission on Immunizations
Meeting Minutes - March 4, 2025**

Attendees: Monique Solieu-Burke (Chair), David Blythe, , Rebecca Carter,, Yen Dang, Janaki Deepak, Liz Elliott, Russell Lewis , Victoria McIntyre, Alicia Mezu, Sarah Vazer, Elizabeth Edwards (Staff)

Guests: Tami Alvarado, Traci Ayub, Jim Campbell, Luke Cunniff, Shilpa Kalawadia, Josh Mazer

- I. Greetings and Introductions
- II. August 2024 Meeting Minutes Approved
- III. Update from Chair
 - A. Overview of the Statewide Advisory Commission on Immunizations Obligations including making recommendations, discussing vaccine shortages and allocation, and providing recommendations for school immunizations, as well as provider reimbursement.
 - B. Maryland Department of Health does not comment on active legislation, but the Chair brought two pieces to the commission's attention for awareness.
 1. The first bill concerning county boards of education granting temporary school admission to students unable to provide proof of immunization under certain circumstances. This bill addresses challenges for schools with large immigrant or transient populations, with debate centered on a 30-day versus 60-day extension period.
 2. The second bill concerned vaccinations as part of a minimum package of child wellness services, ensuring healthcare providers include immunizations in health visits covered by insurance.
 - C. This commission maintains its strong support for mandated vaccinations for children entering school (age-based prior to kindergarten, as well as K-12).
 - D. Fostering a closer working relationship between vaccine suppliers and community outreach initiatives is essential, with the objective of achieving comprehensive, coordinated planning.
 1. An opportunity exists to establish a smaller workgroup dedicated to this objective.
 2. Access to vaccines presents challenges, as certain regulations governing the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program restrict their utilization. While supply meets demand, these access regulations pose significant obstacles. The VFC program requires advance notice to adequately prepare health departments and vaccination sites.
 - E. Targeted educational and supportive interventions are necessary to enhance vaccination rates. Despite a commendable 95% immunization coverage statewide in Maryland, pockets of lower coverage persist, which can be improved through

increased immunization opportunities. Epidemiological analysis is crucial in this regard.

- F. Education and increased awareness of available resources are vital, particularly given the multitude of resources developed during the pandemic.
 - G. Greater emphasis should be placed on the geriatric and adult populations, as these demographics are disproportionately affected by vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs).
- IV. Update on Immunizations: James Campbell, MD, MS - Vice Chair of the Committee on Infectious Diseases
- A. AAP is strengthening its library resources to supplement or function independently of cohesive federal resources.
 - B. February 2025 ACIP meeting has been postponed. Many are concerned about a potential push to exclude academics with perceived conflicts of interest, which could significantly alter the committee's composition and ability to make recommendations based on vaccine data.
 - C. FDA's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) meeting was also postponed, impacting the selection of flu strains for the upcoming season
 - D. The CDC recently announced an EPI aid, deploying EIS officers to assist Texas authorities with the outbreak, which is believed to be larger than reported due to limited access to medical care in affected populations. He emphasized the gravity of the situation, noting it was the first pediatric measles death in the United States since 2003.
- V. Meeting Adjourned