



AWHP Comments to CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices

April 10th, 2025

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The Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention (AWHP) is a non-profit advocacy organization focused on advancing policies that support preventive health for all women and girls. Given the critical role of vaccines in preventing disease and allowing women to live their healthiest lives, AWHP supports efforts that advance vaccine access and uptake.

AWHP is a strong believer in the value of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the key role that it plays in upholding transparency and scientific rigor, providing the public with the latest high-quality data on safety and effectiveness for both recommended vaccines and new vaccines in development. The ACIP plays a critical role in ascertaining that vaccine recommendations are based on in-depth evidence that is thoroughly reviewed, and public meetings give individuals the opportunity to provide comment and review the data first-hand and better understand that vaccines are only recommended when the benefits outweigh the risks. We all want to keep our families and loved ones safe from vaccine-preventable diseases — and maintaining the integrity of the recommendations process, the standards to which we hold our experts, and the rigor of our scientific studies is critical to doing so.

AWHP is concerned about the continued outbreak of measles, and thanks the ACIP for adding the discussion of the outbreak to its agenda. As the nation reels from three deaths due to measles this year — equaling the number recorded in the previous 24 years combined — we must prioritize keeping our families safe through vaccination. While vaccines, like all medical interventions, come with the risk of rare side effects, the benefits far outweigh these small risks. Simply put, when vaccines work, nothing happens — yet people are protected, and they remain safe from deadly diseases. As such, vaccines are a critical part of our preventive health efforts, and we must uphold efforts to keep them accessible and promote their uptake.

This outbreak and the increases in cases of other infectious diseases underscore the unpredictability of vaccine-preventable diseases and the growing need for clear, consistent, and practical immunization recommendations that are feasible to implement in clinical practice. When guidelines are complex, healthcare providers struggle to implement these recommendations, and the public is left vulnerable to not only disease, but also misinformation.

To that end, AWHP also strongly urges the ACIP to reprioritize their assessment of meningococcal vaccine recommendations to ensure that more adolescents and young adults are protected from this deadly disease. The current meningococcal vaccination schedule is complicated, with suboptimal vaccination rates reported

across MenACWY and particularly MenB vaccines. With new pentavalent meningococcal vaccination options, now is the time to strengthen our prevention toolbox against all five types of meningococcal bacteria most likely to cause meningococcal meningitis, and to continue input on the overall platform review of the adolescent meningococcal vaccine schedule.

The ACIP plays a crucial role in protecting America's public health, and we commend your continued dedication to evaluating and setting immunization recommendations that safeguard our communities, prevent disease outbreaks, and ensure access to life-saving vaccines. We thank current and past ACIP members for their time and expertise, and urge the Committee to continue to hold public meetings at a regular cadence.