



Advisory Committee on Medically Contraindicated Vaccinations

Annual Report
to the Public Health Committee
of the
Connecticut General Assembly

Pursuant to Public Act 21-6

December 17, 2021

Overview

Public Act 21-6 “An Act Concerning Immunizations” was passed by the Connecticut General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Lamont on April 27, 2021. The Public Act removed non-medical exemptions for immunizations, except in certain situations. Section 8 of Public Act 21-6 required the Department of Public Health (DPH) to establish an Advisory Committee on Medically Contraindicated Vaccinations, that this committee meet at least twice per year and submit an annual report on its activities and findings to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance on matters of public health.

Summary of Activities:

The committee was constituted in fall of 2021, elected a chair from amongst its members and held the first meeting of the committee on Nov 3, 2021. For brevity the committee was renamed the Advisory Committee on Medical Exemptions (ACME). The charge of the committee as outlined in Public Act 21-6 was reviewed with the members. The duties of the committee include:

- 1: Evaluate the process DPH uses in collecting data concerning medical exemptions and whether DPH should have any oversight over such exemptions.
- 2: Examine if enrollment of an unvaccinated child should be conditioned upon a child meeting certain criteria.
- 3: Calculate the ratio of school nurses to students in each public and non-public school and funding issues surrounding such ratio.
- 4: Assess whether immunizations should be required more frequently than prior to enrollment and prior to entering 7th grade.
- 5a: Determine whether there are discrepancies in issuance of medical contraindication certificates
- 5b: Determine whether to recommend continuing education for providers in vaccine contraindications and precautions.

DPH presented current tools for gathering data on school immunization rates, requirements and exemptions and discussed the limitations of these tools. At the request of the committee, the State Department of Education (SDE) will collect data on current school district policies regarding immunizations and enrollment of unvaccinated

or undervaccinated children and how these policies are implemented and enforced. SDE is also gathering data on the ratio of school nurses to students and will provide information on both of these items at the next committee meeting.

The committee identified some barriers that may impede their work. Currently, DPH does not have access to individual medical exemptions nor the information provided on the exemption forms. This is kept by the school nurse and only the number of medical exemptions is provided to DPH. The inability to access exemption forms will limit the committee's efforts to monitor for discrepancies as outlined in item 5a of the charge listed above.

The committee recommends that DPH explore if statutory authority exists to update regulations reflecting collection of data in the medical exemption form. Specifically, the committee would like to know if providers writing exemptions could be required to share the information with the Department of Public Health.

The committee plans to meet in April 2022 and will review the information collected by SDE and DPH and further discuss how to best carry out its duties moving forward.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jody Terranova", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jody Terranova, DO
Chair, Advisory Committee on Medical Exemptions