

Nirav Shah, MD, JD
Director
Illinois Department of Public Health
RE: Illinois Immunization Advisory Committee

April 11, 2018

Dear Director Shah:

On behalf of our 6,900 physician members (2,100 pediatricians + 4,800 of family physicians), we want to express our concern about the lack of official venue to discuss the prevention of immunization-preventable diseases including the recent influenza season and measles outbreaks in Illinois (<http://dph.illinois.gov/news/separate-potential-measles-exposure>). We are requesting that the department resume meetings of the Immunization Advisory Committee (IAC) which serves as important venue to convene stakeholder groups and department agencies in working to address mutual goals to prevent disease in Illinois children and adults.

In the past two years, the IAC has only convened 3 of the 8 scheduled times. Without these meetings, it is impossible for physician groups and other stakeholders to be fully informed of rates of immunizations in our state, emerging issues including implementation of public acts, and pending legislation and other important immunization program activities.

We applaud the work of IDPH in addressing Newborn Abstinence Syndrome, Opioid Safety, and Diabetes through convening of workgroups to provide input and feedback. IDPH's leadership and actions in these areas have made significant in-roads and differences in how Illinois addresses these issues. Your leadership in immunizations is needed to continue the work in prevention of potential deadly disease in our state.

IAC is established in law and rules (20 IICS 2305/8.4) as venue for addressing these concerns and to allow for feedback and information sharing among a wide variety of stakeholder groups. If the department does not see IAC as the proper vehicle for improving access to immunizations and addressing issues related to vaccine preventable diseases, we are ready, willing and able to work with you to develop a platform that does.

Thanks for listening to our concerns. We look forward to hearing your reply.

Sincerely,

Asim K. Jaffer, MD, President, Illinois Academy of Family Physicians

Alison Tothy, MD, President, Illinois Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics

CC: Jennifer Layden, MD, PhD, Chief Medical Officer and State Epidemiologist, IDPH