

June 4, 2025

Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy:

On behalf of the undersigned medical associations, we write to share our grave concern about the significant confusion caused by recent conflicting announcements regarding the recommended immunization schedule for healthy children and pregnant women. As clinicians who immunize and recommend immunization to patients every day for infectious diseases like COVID-19, we find ourselves still unclear as to which recommendations are operational, about vaccine coverage by insurers, and about which scientific basis was used for these changing recommendations. The confusion sown by conflicting statements and incomplete guidance from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) makes it difficult for Americans to make informed choices about how best to protect themselves and their families.

During your Senate confirmation hearings in January, you stated that you would not take away Americans' access to vaccines. However, on May 27<sup>th</sup> you announced that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) would be removing the option for healthy children and pregnant women to get the COVID-19 vaccine. This unilateral announcement was made independent of any evidence or clinical data upon which the decision was based.

Two days following your announcement, on May 29<sup>th</sup>, the CDC released an [updated](#) Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule. Fortunately, this updated vaccine schedule preserves choice for families by ensuring that the COVID-19 vaccine remains accessible. However, we remain deeply concerned that these recent decisions were made without any input from the public or scientific community.

It appears that your May 27<sup>th</sup> decision bypassed input from the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), whose role is to make recommendations for vaccine use once a product has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). In fact, ACIP is meeting on June 25-27, where they are scheduled to vote on updated COVID-19 vaccine recommendations. It is unclear why these decisions could not have been held for discussion and input at the imminent ACIP meeting. Your actions undermine the established vaccine recommendation process that depends on robust data analysis and discussion by the experts on the committee, as well as from professional societies and the general public. The actions taken this week also lack transparency and undermine the scientific process.

In addition, there are many questions left unresolved from last week's announcement. For instance, while it was announced that the vaccine would no longer be recommended for pregnant women, and

the updated vaccine schedule removed the recommendation, these steps seem to contradict the FDA guidance just unveiled on May 20, which noted that pregnancy itself is a condition that predisposes a person to severe disease and hospitalization from COVID-19. These decisions therefore seem to go against the FDA and CDC's own recommendations for pregnant women. It also deprives babies, who have hospitalization rates similar to adults 65-74 years of age, from the protection against COVID-19 transferred when their mothers are vaccinated during pregnancy.

Finally, there are questions about the implications for coverage of COVID-19 vaccines by commercial insurers, Medicaid, and the Vaccines for Children program. These conflicting, unilateral decisions take away from some Americans the option to get a COVID-19 vaccine if they want one, and if they are able to find a vaccine, it could leave them to pay the costs out of their own pockets. It is also unclear whether health care workers would be eligible to be vaccinated.

Because of these concerns, we urge HHS to consult with ACIP and use ACIP's expertise and recommendations to clarify HHS's position, and we urge HHS to reinstate the previous evidence-based recommendations for the COVID-19 vaccine that were established in consultation with ACIP. We also urge the Department to follow the transparent, science-driven process that allows input from ACIP and from the public who will be affected by these decisions.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians  
American College of Physicians  
Academic Pediatric Association  
American Pediatric Society  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Gerontological Society of America  
Pediatric Policy Council  
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Society of General Internal Medicine