



Local Health Departments Prevent Disease through Immunization

Local health departments are the backbone of the vaccine infrastructure in the United States. They vaccinate people in their communities, providing one of the most successful and cost-effective ways to prevent disease and death. These local agencies work with public- and private-sector physicians to assure effective immunization practices, including proper storage and delivery of vaccines.

Immunization has been one of the most successful and safest public health measures available to populations worldwide, with an unparalleled record of disease reduction and prevention. Each year, vaccine-preventable diseases cause long-term illness, hospitalization, and death. While pediatric vaccination rates remain consistently high throughout the nation, adolescent and adult vaccination rates lag behind.

NACCHO Recommendations

To save lives and money, the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) recommends the following in fiscal year (FY) 2018:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

SECTION 317 IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM

FY17: \$607 million (\$324 million from Prevention and Public Health Fund (PPHF))

President's FY2018 Budget: \$521 million (\$204 million from the PPHF)

FY18 NACCHO Request: \$650 million

NACCHO urges continued support for the Section 317 Immunization Program. This core public health program provides funding for the federal purchase of vaccines to protect children, adolescents, and adults from infectious disease. Over its 50 year history, the program has addressed the needs of priority populations including underinsured children not eligible for the mandatory Vaccines for Children (VFC) program and uninsured adults.

The 317 Program is also critical to the federal, state, and local support structure that ensures effective, safe, and timely vaccination. This discretionary program provides the essential infrastructure to deliver the VFC program, provide vaccines purchased with 317 funding, and respond to disease outbreaks. This support is critical to ensure high vaccination coverage levels and minimize vaccine-preventable disease.

The Program provides grants to local health departments in 50 states, eight U.S. territories, and six cities (Chicago, Houston, New York City, Philadelphia, San Antonio, and Washington, DC) to purchase vaccine for 17 vaccine-preventable diseases and support infrastructure and operations at the local, state, and national levels.

There has been a significant increase in requirements on immunization programs in recent years without additional resources to effectively carry them out – including efforts to update systems, support meaningful use, on-board providers, move to electronic ordering and inventory, increase the number of provider site visits for VFC accountability, and increase monitoring of storage and handling and fraud and abuse.

Investing in childhood vaccines produces big savings. Vaccination of children born between 1994 and 2013 will do the following:

- *Prevent 322 million illnesses.*
- *Help avoid more than 730,000 preventable deaths.*
- *Save nearly \$1.4 trillion in total societal costs, including nearly \$300 billion in direct costs.*

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Role of Local and State Health Departments in Immunization

The Section 317 Immunization Program provides funding for immunization operations/infrastructure and vaccine purchase. Operations and infrastructure funding supports the following:

- Disease surveillance and disease reporting to CDC.
- Outbreak control and response.
- Education of the public and health care providers.
- Immunization registries and immunization information systems.
- Capacity to implement third-party billing for reimbursement.
- Community immunization education activities and vaccination clinics.
- Implementation and enforcement of school and daycare requirements.
- Population assessment and identify pockets of need or at-risk populations.
- Special strategies to improve coverage rates in adolescents and adults.
- Program oversight, assurance of quality and accountability, and evaluation of effectiveness.

A Health Affairs study about the economic burden of vaccine-preventable diseases among U.S. adults examined 10 vaccines recommended for adults 19 years and older. The study estimated the economic burden at approximately \$9 billion (2015). Nearly 80% (\$7.1 billion) of those costs are attributable to treating unvaccinated persons.

Source: <http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/early/2016/10/07/hlthaff.2016.0462>

About NACCHO

NACCHO is the voice of the more than 3,000 local health departments across the country. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to ensure the safety of the water we drink, the food we eat, and the air we breathe. Learn more at <http://naccho.org/programs/community-health/infectious-disease/immunization>.

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NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health



The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice with local health departments.

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