The American Public Health Association (APHA)

THE NEED FOR CONTINUED AND STRENGTHENED SUPPORT FOR IMMUNIZATION PROGRAMS

The American Public Health Association,

Knowing that through past resolutions and policy statements the Association has affirmed the importance of immunizations, both in the United States and globally (Resolutions 7805, 7806, 7906, 8706, 9103); and

Recognizing that great progress has been made in improving immunization coverage among infants and young children as a result of the Childhood Immunization Initiative; and

Recognizing that continued success in controlling vaccine-preventable diseases requires assuring that the 11,000 infants born each day receive needed immunizations on schedule; and

Noting that the National Vaccine Advisory Committee (NVAC) has recently published a report describing the strategies needed to sustain success in childhood immunizations; and

Noting that the Surgeon General on April 27, 1999 supported the establishment of a nationwide network of state/community population-based immunization registries to facilitate this immunization as called for in an NVAC report; and

Noting that the NVAC report called for a five-year federal grant program to fund development and implementation of registries while a long-term financing mechanism was being developed; and

Noting that recent issues raised regarding vaccine safety make it imperative that vaccine safety monitoring activities be enhanced (immunization registries being an important component); and

Noting further that immunization of adolescents and adults lags significantly behind progress with young children; and

Noting that recent cuts in federal funding for immunizations threaten the continuation of existing activities and preclude the further development of registries and vaccine safety monitoring or the extension of programs to immunize adolescents and adults:

1. Reaffirms its support for immunization as one of the most cost-effective means of preventing infectious diseases;
2. Urges the Congress to restore funding of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) immunization program to at least the level of the 1996 appropriation;
3. Urges CDC and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to develop, and the Congress to approve, a legislative proposal for a five-year grant program to support development and implementation of immunization registries, as called for by NVAC;
4. Urges the Congress to fund fully the Vaccine Safety Action Plan developed by the DHHS Vaccine Safety Working Group; and
5. Urges CDC and DHHS to develop, and the Congress to approve a legislative proposal to provide federal support for immunization of adolescents and adults.
6. Urges CDC and DHHS to develop and fund additional programs for outreach to those populations that remain hard to reach and are under-immunized.

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