

AAP, 44 chapters call on HHS to rescind action on pharmacy vaccination

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The AAP and 44 of its chapters are asking federal officials to rescind their decision allowing licensed pharmacists to administer vaccines to children regardless of state laws.

“This announcement threatens the medical home, depriving children and families of much needed medical care and clinical guidance, and further exacerbates inequities in the delivery of childhood immunizations,” the [groups said in a letter](#) to Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Alex M. Azar II, J.D., on Friday.

[Azar’s Aug. 19 decision](#) applies to licensed pharmacists and pharmacy interns vaccinating children ages 3-18 years. Azar said he took the step to increase access and [improve vaccination rates](#), which have dropped during the pandemic.

However, the Academy and AAP chapters said children should be vaccinated with the pediatrician they know and trust and who can deliver additional services.

“The pediatric medical home is where children’s medical needs are best met; pediatricians assess children’s developmental and mental health, counseling about nutrition and injury-prevention, and chronic disease management in addition to administering vaccines,” the groups wrote.

Diseases, developmental delays, child abuse and mental health issues all may go undetected without visits for preventive care, they said.

In addition, few pharmacies participate in the Vaccines for Children program, which provides free vaccines to children who are low income, uninsured, American Indian or Alaska Native.

Pediatric practices are stocked with vaccines and have taken steps to see patients safely during the pandemic.

“For all of these reasons, we encourage HHS to rescind its August 19 decision,” the AAP wrote, “and stand ready to work with you to bolster the existing pediatric immunization delivery system: our nation's pediatric practices.”

Resources

- [AAP guidance on conducting well-child visits during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- [CDC immunization schedules](#)
- [AAP clinical report "Countering Vaccine Hesitancy"](#)
- [Information for parents from HealthyChildren.org on seeing a pediatrician during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- [AAP immunization resources](#)
- [AAP's #CallYourPediatrician campaign](#)

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