



Illinois Public Health Association

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Comments to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)

September 18 - 19, 2025 Meeting Docket ID: CDC-2025-0454-0001

Agency: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

The Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA) is pleased to submit written comments for the September 18 - 19, 2025 Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) meeting.

The ACIP agenda includes an opportunity for the committee to formally discuss and vote to change the current universal recommendations for hepatitis B birth dose. On behalf of the Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA), we write to urge the ACIP to maintain the recommendation for the universal hepatitis B birth dose. Since its implementation in 1991, data show that hepatitis infections and related deaths have decreased significantly. Its reversal will eliminate access to a safe and effective vaccine that prevents chronic hepatitis B infection and liver cancer.

The hepatitis B birth dose recommendations have prevented hepatitis B infections, reduced health care spending, and saved lives. There has been a 95% reduction in infant hepatitis B infections and an estimated 90,100 deaths prevented since moving from a risk-based to a universal recommendation for the hepatitis B vaccine. According to a recent study, six million hepatitis B infections and nearly one million hospitalizations have been prevented in less than 30 years.

The universal birth dose of hepatitis B vaccine has been extremely effective in the U.S. in preventing mother to child transmission. Before we implemented the universal birth dose in the U.S. - 18,000 babies each year were infected at birth or early childhood – and universal vaccination has helped reduce that number by 98% (it is estimated that less than 200 babies are infected at birth in the U.S. annually). A change in the recommendation will cause harm, and will hinder efforts to eliminate hepatitis B.

The health of our populations depends on ACIP's commitment to evidence, ethics, and public health—and we urge you to continue serving our communities with the transparency and scientific rigor that has been a hallmark of the work done by ACIP over the years. Because of the clear benefits of the universal hepatitis B birth dose, IPHA urges ACIP to maintain the current recommendation. Adopting any other approach will create unnecessary confusion for health care providers, result in preventable hepatitis B infections, and increase health care costs. Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Tom Hughes, Executive Director
Illinois Public Health Association
CMM:File