

Kolva, Patti

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From: Ellen Smith <ellen.smith6@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2016 9:22 PM
To: Findley, Cynthia
Subject: Fwd: Response to: School Immunization Regulations

2016 APR 22 AM 11:33

Ms. Findley,

I understand, by way of the Pennsylvania Medical Society, that there are new proposed school immunization regulations that are currently in a comment period. Please accept my comments, as a board certified family physician, regarding these regulations. Should you find a need to discuss this further, please don't hesitate to contact me at the address at the bottom.

"I recommend continuing to have a provisional period of some length, probably 3 or 6 months. If a child has surgery, or a serious illness such as pneumonia, motor vehicle accident or the like, vaccination is not a first priority, nor should it be. If he or she misses the vaccine in a very small window, then they will be excluded from school, after having already been out for the condition mentioned above. Being 3-6 months late for a vaccination is not likely to have any significant effect on outcomes, but giving no provisional period will add undue stress to parents, children, school personnel and providers/staff. There are too many time sensitive issues that are truly time sensitive (e.g. responding to lab and diagnostic results, calling patients, school nurses caring for sick children, parents getting their children fed and given help on homework) to make this issue excessively and inappropriately time-sensitive. If children consistently get their vaccines within 3-6 months of the required date, vaccine preventable illnesses will go down.

I believe there should be "compelling" philosophical reasons for parents to be permitted to not-vaccinate their children. If the effect of not-vaccinating a child was just going to affect that child and family, that would be one thing, but one child who is not vaccinated "by choice" could cause the hospitalization or death of a child who is not vaccinated by situation, for example, a child undergoing chemotherapy or having HIV. Several vaccine preventable diseases, including chicken pox, to name one, are contagious at least a day or two before there are any outward signs of the disease, so that unvaccinated child on chemotherapy can be harmed before the parents of the unvaccinated by choice child appears ill. "

Thank you, Ellen G. Smith, MD, FAAFP

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