



July 30, 2020

Honorable Tom Wolf, Governor
Honorable Rachel Levine, MD, Secretary of Health

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VIA EMAIL FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

Dear Governor Wolf and Secretary Levine:

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP) and our more than 5,500 physician, resident and student members across the Commonwealth, thank you for your efforts to stress the importance of immunizations during the current public health crisis. As children return to school in the fall and flu season ramps up, it is more vital than ever that we encourage all Pennsylvanians to get their immunizations on time to avoid an outbreak of vaccine-preventable infectious diseases amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

As family physicians, we have seen an alarming decrease in patient visits due to COVID-19 and have initiated a campaign to encourage patients to check in with their health care providers and schedule their well visits. This includes the many children who will be returning to school in-person in just a few short weeks. Pennsylvania's family physicians are ready and waiting to see patients while adhering to all state and federal health and safety guidelines.

We worry, however, that your recent order to temporarily suspend requirements for children's immunizations will discourage parents from bringing their children in for their vaccinations and well visits before the start of the school year. Given the ongoing pandemic and the looming threat of flu season, our state cannot afford to have our children fall behind on critical immunizations.

We respectfully ask that you reconsider suspending requirements for children's immunizations and, instead, encourage patients to stay up to date on their vaccinations. We should not be putting our children in danger of vaccine-preventable diseases while promoting the need for returning them to the classroom.

Thank you for your consideration. Please don't hesitate to utilize the PAFP as a resource on these critical public health issues.

Sincerely,

Tracey Conti, MD
President