

Dear Public Health Committee,

I am writing this testimony in opposition to SB-94: AN ACT ALLOWING PHARMACISTS TO ADMINISTER THE INFLUENZA VACCINE TO CHILDREN TWELVE YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER.

There are a number of issues with allowing a pharmacist to administer vaccines and this one in particular.

1. What if the minor child has an allergy that is not disclosed to the pharmacist? We cannot go on the assumption that the minor will disclose this vital piece of medical information, especially if they are feeling pressured into getting this vaccine by the pharmacist, technician or friends. The parent is not there to inform the pharmacist.
2. If the minor does not disclose that they received this vaccine to their parents, then they may be double dosed if their parent(s) or guardian takes the minor to the doctor's office to receive this vaccine. Are there safety studies as to what happens if a child receives double doses/boosters?
3. If a parent brings a child in, that is different. Whether or not that child is capable of informed consent, this bill allows a child to not need parental or guardian consent before a pharmacist is able to provide the influenza vaccine. What if the child has developmental or cognitive issues that may challenge their ability to fully understand what is being done? What happens if a pharmacist proceeds to vaccinate this child without adult consent when the child is not capable of informed consent?
4. Is the pharmacy equipped to handle fainting spells, seizures or worse adverse reactions to the vaccine? Do they have space to let the minor rest or wait for medical care? Or will they administer the vaccine and send them out without a short period of observation?
5. Pharmacies receive bonuses for the number of influenza vaccines that are given, as do medical offices. This is a conflict of interest at the least. It leaves the door open for a pharmacist to place that monetary bonus and reaching the "numbers" above the possible repercussions for a minor they are not acquainted with and do not know the medical history of. We should not forget that our children are taught to respect the "white coat" and that they know best...even though they may not know what is best for that individual child with their given history.
6. If a parent is unaware of the administered vaccine, how will they know to correlate an adverse reaction—which can include seizures, autoimmune reactions and more—to what happened and therefore be able to have their child treated effectively and immediately?

I ask that you oppose this bill as these decisions should be made between a parent, a minor and his/her pediatrician, not an unfamiliar pharmacist. We are not talking about an adult that is coming in fully capable of informed consent and knowledge of their medical history.

Please leave the law so that only adults can receive influenza vaccinations from a pharmacist.

Sincerely,
Ariana Fine
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