

February 22, 2019

**Opposition to SB 94: An Act Allowing
Pharmacists to Administer the Influenza Vaccine to Children Twelve Years of Age and Older**

Distinguished members of the Public Health Committee,

I would like to express my **opposition** to Senate Bill 94. Extending the authority of pharmacists to administer flu vaccines to children is very risky.

There are reasons that pharmacists do not write prescriptions. Physicians write prescriptions based on factors specific to each patient. Clearly not every medication is suitable or appropriate for every patient. Many people cannot tolerate the same medications as others, even with something as commonly used as antibiotics. **Are pharmacists qualified to prescribe drugs to people without an exam or sufficient knowledge of medical history?** Would the person follow up with the pharmacist if they suffered a reaction? What if the drug affected the body in a way that took some time to manifest symptoms? Wouldn't the person then go to their physician, even though a pharmacist issued the drug? It wouldn't make sense.

Why, then, are pharmacists able to administer flu vaccines to people who simply walk in? Why should we assume that everyone across the board can tolerate them? There are a variety of antibiotics in flu shots, among other ingredients that may cause reactions in some people, including, though not limited to, egg protein, formaldehyde, thimerisol, polysorbate 80 and 20, steroids, sorbitan, squalene, barium, EDTA, and DNA (including from canine kidney cells, viral DNA and cell proteins from the fall armyworm moth).

Let's apply these questions to a developing child:

- What relationship does a pharmacist have with a child to fully understand that child's **health history and potential for reaction**? As of 2011, 54% of American children had one or more chronic health conditions. What is that number at now? Are pharmacists trained to assess those risks?
 - How well is a pharmacist trained to recognize and respond to all types of vaccine reactions?
 - Who will be responsible if the child has an adverse response?
 - How much knowledge and clinical practice do pharmacists have to correctly administer vaccines to children, whose anatomies are distinctly different than those of adults? Incorrect administration can cause SIRVA (Shoulder Injury Related to Vaccine Administration), which is becoming increasingly common and the most frequently compensated vaccine injury. 2,198 reports of shoulder dysfunction following flu shots were made to the CDC from 2010-2016.
- Will this bill lead to children and teenagers being able to get flu shots without parental consent? How many kids will be motivated by the incentives the pharmacies give (gift cards, anyone)?

I am definitely concerned about legislative creep and the possibility for vaccination without consent and vaccination in school. Vaccine administration should be limited to a patient and their physician. This is not candy and should not be promoted or handed out as such. Please vote **"No"** to SB 94.

Thank you,
Meredith Nielson, Cheshire