



To: Committee on Health and Human Services

From: Dennis Cooley MD
Legislative Coordinator

Date: 3/8/16

Subject: HB2646 –“Allowing pharmacists and certain other individuals to administer any vaccine to any person six years of age or older.”

Chairman Hawkins and Members of the Committee

The Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (KAAP) represents over 90% of the practicing pediatricians in the state. The KAAP has the fundamental goal that all children and adolescents in Kansas have the opportunity to grow safe and strong. The KAAP is providing testimony in opposition to passage of HB 2646

Immunizations save countless lives and are one of the most important public health measures we can provide. The KAAP encourages efforts to increase immunization rates in our state. However, we feel that allowing pharmacist to administer immunizations to children 6 years of age and above is not the correct approach and in the long run will have little effect on the overall immunization rates in the state.

The KAAP is opposed to HB 2646 for the following reasons

- It undermines the medical home concept
- Increases fragmentation of medical care
- Has a negative impact on our local health departments
- May prevent children from receiving needed preventative services
- Makes management of reactions by responding providers more difficult
- Will have minimal if any impact in overall immunization rates

Keeping immunizations within the medical home affords the best opportunity for children to receive appropriate well child care. By allowing pharmacist to provide these immunization, care becomes fragmented and opportunities for diagnosis and treatment of previously undetected illnesses are missed. This is especially true if parents mistakenly assume that preventative care visits are not

needed as long as the child is immunized.

While immunizations administered at the medical home is the ideal we realize that this can't always be the case. In counties where health care providers are not available to administer immunizations strong county health departments are there to administer these needed vaccines. The staff in the health departments are well versed in immunizations and can readily answer parental questions and manage vaccine administration. They have been doing it for many years. Indeed vaccines are an integral part to county health departments and many of these health departments rely on vaccine administration fees to help funding for other services they provide communities. Allowing pharmacists to give these vaccines could have a negative impact on our county health departments.

The ability of pharmacists to execute the physical task of administering vaccines safely is less of an issue than their ability to deal with the rare consequences of an adverse reaction to an immunization. Childhood vaccines have an outstanding record of safety and efficacy, and reactions tend to be minor but can be frightening to a parent. In the rare event of a reaction the pharmacists likely isn't there to provide reassurance or any treatment that is needed. More importantly, they may not be able to provide the physician responding to the reaction with the information they need in a timely manner.

Maximum immunization rates are the goal of the KAAP and other medical professional groups in our state. However, we believe these immunizations should be provided in the best and safest way possible. Allowing pharmacist to administer these vaccines outside of the medical home or the local county health departments is not the approach that we recommend. We appreciate the committees attention to this issue.

Submitted

Dennis M Cooley MD, FAAP
Legislative Coordinator
Kansas Chapter
American Academy of Pediatrics