



To: <sup>Established 1859</sup> House Health and Human Services Committee

From: Rachelle Colombo  
Director of Government Affairs

Date: January 23, 2017

Subject: HB 2030; concerning pharmacist administered vaccinations

The Kansas Medical Society appreciates the opportunity to appear today on HB 2030, which would allow pharmacists, students and interns to administer vaccinations to children six years of age and older. While physicians support efforts to increase vaccination rates for Kansas patients, we cannot support the bill as written.

It is the position of the Kansas Medical Society that the less care is fragmented, the better patients are served. Ideally, all vaccinations would be administered by primary care physicians where patients would receive comprehensive evaluation and treatment. However, physicians have long-realized the benefit of partnering with other providers to ensure patients are immunized even if they do not have a medical home. For this reason, local health departments are currently able to administer vaccinations in every county in Kansas. Though some vaccination rates remain low, it cannot be attributed to poor access.

School age children have high pediatric vaccination rates; the drop-off comes on optional vaccinations for adolescents. Kansas children up to the age of twelve have high vaccinations rates for those immunization rates required for schooling. This includes pediatric catch-up immunizations and the final round of TDAP, administered when a child reaches age 11. This is a critical opportunity for physicians to evaluate the overall health of the patient, discuss bodily changes and the importance of adolescent vaccinations. Even still, the rate of vaccinations decreases after age 12.

The reason is two-fold; first, adolescents simply do not spend as much time in a doctor's office as younger children with developing immune systems. Second, there remains an element of cultural opposition and lacking education about HPV immunizations that overrides all other barriers to adolescent vaccination rates.

For these reasons, we do not support allowing pharmacists, interns and students to administer vaccinations to children ages six and older, resulting in further fragmentation of care. But because of a strong belief in the importance of increasing vaccination rates in Kansas, we would suggest amending the bill and raising the patient's age from six to twelve. This would ensure that the bulk of immunizations and accompanying pediatric issues are handled by a physician with a comprehensive understanding of underlying conditions, risks and overall health of the patient. It would also provide an opportunity to evaluate whether partnering with pharmacists to administer vaccinations to a smaller and less vulnerable patient population could result in higher immunizations rates and better health for all Kansans. We respectfully request that when the committee considers HB 2030, they protect and promote the health of Kansans by raising the age from six to twelve. Thank you.