

Dear Chairs Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and members of the [Joint Health And Human Services Committee](#),

I am a family physician and the president-elect of the Maine Academy of Family Physicians, speaking on behalf of the Maine Academy of Family Physicians. The academy strongly supports LD 93, “An Act to Reduce Cost and Increase Access to Disease Prevention by Expanding the Universal Childhood Immunization Program to Include Adults”. I cannot overstate how excited and supportive family physicians are about this bill. To our specialty, with a major focus of preventing diseases, not being able to provide the Center for Disease Control’s recommended vaccines to all of our patients is extremely frustrating to us.

The most common reason we struggle to provide these vaccines to our adult patients is due to the high upfront costs combined with the low reimbursement rates to administer them. This is especially true for smaller offices who are unable to use all the dosages in the vaccine vials before the expiration date and thus lose money on these expensive vaccines.

Instead of providing these vaccines conveniently at the time of a patient’s visit with us, we are sending a prescription to the patient’s pharmacy where they often will then need to make another appointment to obtain the vaccine. This extra step causes unnecessary work and wastes time for both the busy physician and the patient. For patients with transportation issues (which is many in our rural state), it means they often are just not able to get these crucial vaccines.

The current childhood immunization program is an excellent program to provide free vaccines to all kids in Maine and is used by most family physicians. The convenience of having childhood vaccines in stock in our offices has allowed many kids to avoid diseases like chickenpox, measles, ear infections, and pneumonia that would have otherwise kept them from attending school, kept their parents from going to work, and would have added unnecessary health care costs. We would welcome the

opportunity to work with the Maine Immunization Program to expand this efficient program to include all adults up to 64 years old. By conveniently and affordably providing adult vaccines in our offices we could prevent adults from obtaining fatal and debilitating diseases like tetanus, painful diseases like shingles, and unnecessary diseases like pneumonia.

In summary, expanding the childhood immunization program to include adults not only makes logical sense but would be a game changer for family physicians. Allowing patients to more conveniently have access to vaccines at their doctor's office improves efficiency, saves health care costs, and helps keep all Mainers healthy regardless of their socioeconomic status. Please consider voting in favor of LD 93.

Thank you for your time and all of your public service to Maine,

Marco Cornelio MD  
President-Elect, Maine Academy of Family Physicians

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LD 93

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