

Current Legislative Issues

Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics President, Dr. Dennis Cooley developed the following talking points for various bills pending in Kansas. Dr. Cooley can develop additional speaking points on other pending bills at your request. Please refer to the Advocacy Updates for more information about the bills.

SB 147- A bill to make HIV testing of mothers “Opt-IN”

- There continues to be maternal-infant transmission of HIV despite the availability of efficacious interventions for prevention.
- These interventions cannot be implemented unless the HIV status of the mother is known
- In similar diseases involving maternal-infant transmission universal screening has been shown to be the only effective way to cut down the transmission rates
- We also know that opt-out testing programs will result in the highest rate of testing being performed.

SB 448- A bill to amend state statutes to obtain information about infant deaths

- Infants die at a 20% higher rate in Kansas than the national average.
- Black Infants die at a faster rate in our state than in 46 other states.
- Kansas infant mortality rates are higher than some third world countries
- The state’s current statutes are hampering us from obtaining good information to help communities make decisions on how to best address the problem locally
- Programs that have been successful in lowering infant mortality rates have been carried out at the local level.
- These programs, such as FIMR (Fetal Infant Mortality Review) and PRAMS (Prenatal Risk Assessment Monitoring System), are not available to us because of current statutes.

HB 2448- After the efforts of KMS and KAAP this bill was amended to allow pharmacist to give children only flu shots and only to children 6 and above. If you feel strongly against this I have included speaking points

- The Medical Home is the best and most effective way to provide health care. The state is currently striving to provide medical homes to all children
- Pharmacist providing immunizations to children will have the effect of undermining the medical home concept
- Decisions that are made concerning the proper administration of immunizations can be confusing and difficult to make. These decisions require providers experienced in immunizations administration, usage and potential complications.
- The state of Kansas has an extensive public health system with clinics in each county that can provide these immunizations if providers are unable to.
- School vaccine clinics are the better way to administer vaccines to large numbers of children during pandemic situations
- Kansas is moving to having all children entered into the state immunization registry which pharmacist may not be able to utilize.

HB 2574- A bill that will allow parents to refuse immunization for school entry and require special consent for all vaccines with any heavy metal components

- Vaccinations are considered one of the most important public health initiatives in the history of mankind.
- Despite this there is a small minority of the public that are mistrustful of vaccines. Most of this is not based in scientific facts but on emotional factors that result in misconceptions and misinformation.
- To date there has been no good evidence that associates thimerosal and autism or any illnesses.
- Aluminum is found throughout the environment and our foods. The tiny amount found in vaccines is the equivalent found in 33 ounces of infant formula.
- In the last decade based on now refuted evidence from a disgraced physician England went through a period of decreased immunizations against measles. This resulted in well-documented increases in the occurrence of the disease and the severe complications that can follow such hospitalizations and the ultimate complication death.

