



# Policy Statement

## Immunization Program

### Nursing Division

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

Vaccines prevent disease, disability, and death in both children and adults. Providing vaccinations is a core public health function, a vital public health tool, and one of the most cost-effective public health-promoting interventions a public health authority like the Southern Nevada Health District can perform. In 2000, the Institute of Medicine described the U.S. immunization system as "a national treasure that is too often taken for granted". The report called for increases in funding to support an immunization infrastructure.<sup>1</sup>

#### **PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT**

Many people don't realize the role that immunization and public health play in their daily lives. Unfortunately, unless there is a problem, immunization services are often invisible to the public. An immunization program coupled with sufficient vaccine supply, an informed public, and a public health system that can vaccinate large numbers of people can improve the quality of life for a community.

#### **POSITION**

The District supports strategies that are designed to strengthen and sustain public health and improve the health of communities through immunization programs. The District's Immunization Program is designed to assist all Clark County residents, regardless of age or economic status, attain optimal health while ensuring access to vaccines is free from barriers. The District supports school and child care vaccination requirements as an effective public health tool for increasing vaccination rates and preventing the transmission of diseases. Recognizing the need for vaccinations does not end in childhood, the District is also committed to promoting public awareness and education about vaccinations to encourage adults to get vaccinated.

The District is always seeking to improve its services and processes. As a result of our continuous improvement processes, the District has revamped and restructured its Health Card program. Workplace vaccination services previously provided as a component of the Adult Immunization Program and support for the Health Card Program will be modified. Businesses will no longer need a formal agreement to have their employees receive adult vaccines at any one of our five vaccine locations located across southern Nevada. Those employees may continue to receive appropriate adult vaccines with remittance being provided at the time of service. Additionally, many Occupational Health related vaccines are offered at locations across the valley. This small-step will allow the District to better serve the community and remain true to a core public health purpose of preventing the spread of disease and epidemics.

#### **WHO NEEDS TO KNOW THIS INFORMATION?**

All Clark County, Nevada parents, employees, private businesses, public agencies and their rule-making bodies of public agencies. For additional information please call (702) 759-0878.

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<sup>1</sup> Institute of Medicine, *Calling the Shots: Immunization Finance Policies and Practices* (2000)