

# **Vaccine Access Update**

**Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health**

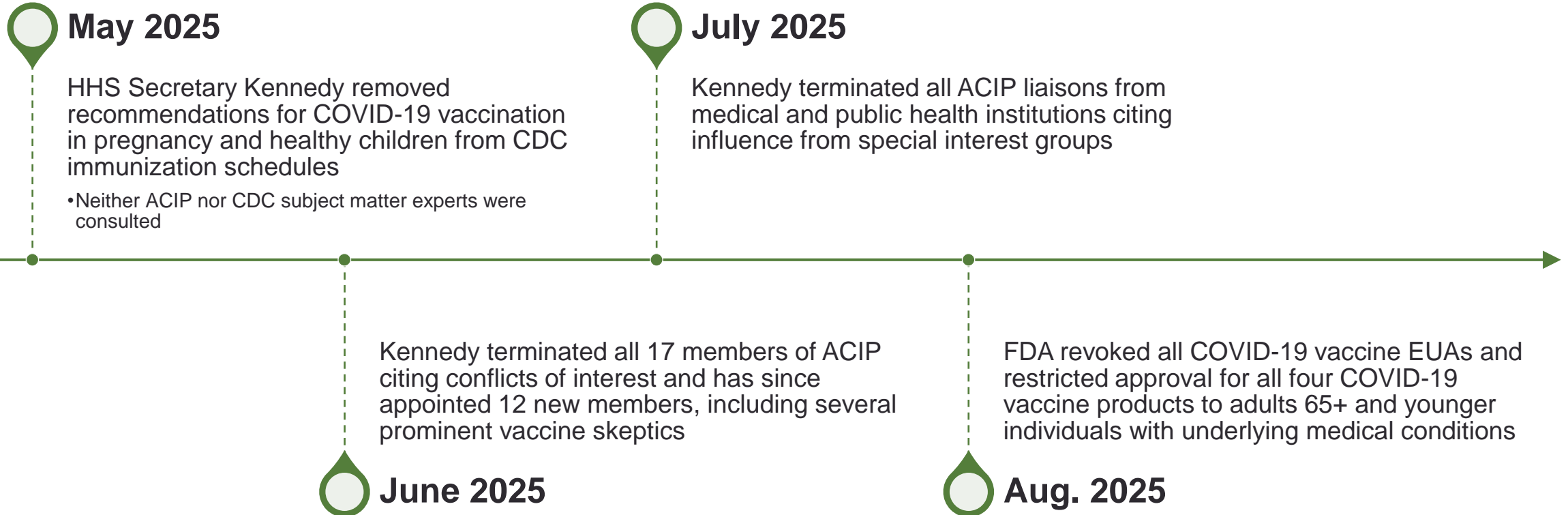
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**Dr. Dean Sidelinger, MD, State Epidemiologist and Health Officer**

## What is happening?

### Federal action and inaction have caused significant confusion regarding vaccine policy

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# The results

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## Restricted access to the COVID-19 vaccine

- Pharmacies required prescriptions or attestation of underlying medical conditions for the updated COVID-19 vaccine due to the narrow FDA approval language and absence of 2025-26 ACIP recommendations
- Providers and pharmacies reluctant to stock the 2025-26 COVID-19 vaccine

## Provider confusion

## Consumer confusion

# Oregon responds: The West Coast Health Alliance

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- Oregon, Washington, California, and Hawaii have issued evidence-based immunization [recommendations](#) **informed by respected, national medical organizations**
- Goals
  - Provide evidence-based vaccine recommendations
  - Ensure continued access to vaccines at low or no cost

# Consensus WCHA 2025-26 Respiratory Season Immunization Recommendations

	COVID-19 vaccine	Influenza vaccine	RSV immunization
<b>Children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All 6-23 months</li> <li>• All 2-17 years with risk factors</li> <li>• All with close contact with others with risk factors</li> <li>• All who choose protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All <math>\geq 6</math> months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All <math>&lt; 8</math> months<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• All 8-19 months with risk factors<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Pregnancy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All planning, pregnant, postpartum, and lactating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All planning, pregnant, postpartum, and lactating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32-36 weeks gestational age<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Adults</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All <math>\geq 65</math> years</li> <li>• All 18-64 years with risk factors</li> <li>• All with close contact with others with risk factors</li> <li>• All who choose protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All <math>\geq 18</math> years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All <math>\geq 75</math> years</li> <li>• All 50-74 years with risk factors</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup>Either immunization with nirsevimab/clesrovimab or maternal RSV vaccination is indicated to protect infants from severe RSV infection.

# Oregon responds: Multi-agency effort

OHA manages response efforts and coordinates with:

- Department of Consumer and Business Services
- Board of Pharmacy
- State Board of Nursing
- Oregon Medical Board

## Agency actions

- Policy changes to make WCHA-recommended vaccines easily accessible, covered by insurance
- Communications through multiple channels to boost provider and consumer confidence

### COVID-19 vaccine guidance in Oregon



Everyone ages 6 months and older can receive the 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccine.

No prescription needed.



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(Enter) Division or Office (Mixed Case)



# ACIP Meeting Updates

# The September 18-19 ACIP meeting included MMRV, hepatitis B, and COVID-19 vaccine votes

- **MMRV:** adopted recommendation against MMRV vaccine in children under 4 due to risk of febrile seizure and **voted for adoption of resolution to VFC**
  - **Impact:** VFC theoretically will no longer cover MMRV in children under 4, however, this level of detail is not typically provided to VFC; uncertain if coverage will change at this time  
N.B. MMRV is used in 15% of first doses; separate MMR and varicella vaccines are available
- **Hepatitis B:** vote has been tabled; anticipate next vote on hepatitis B vaccine will include more restrictive language regarding age of first dose (> 2, 6 months, or even 12 years)
  - **Impact:** coverage will not change at this time
- **COVID-19: adopted three recommendations:** (1) for additional and controversial language to be added to VIS; (2) that informed consent should occur prior to vaccination; and (3) that COVID-19 vaccines be recommended in alignment with FDA approval (65 and older, 6 months – 64 years risk-based)
  - **Impacts:** (1) biased and inaccurate language may reduce vaccine uptake; (2) no impact, this is standard of care; (3) coverage will not change at this time

# What's next?

- Continue monitoring federal action on vaccines
  - Await CDC action on September 18-19 ACIP votes
  - The next ACIP meeting is scheduled for October 22-23
  - Explore long-term policy options

# Thank you

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# Acronyms

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ACIP – Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices

CDC – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

EUA – Emergency Use Authorization

FDA – Food and Drug Administration

MMRV – Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella vaccine

RSV – Respiratory Syncytial Virus

VFC – Vaccines for Children program

WCHA – West Coast Health Alliance