



MEMORANDUM

MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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October 18, 2019

To: MSSNY Council
From: MSSNY Infectious Diseases Committee
Subject: Resolution 166—*Strategies to Improve NYS Immunizations Rates in Children*
Introduced by MSSNY Committee on Infectious Diseases

The following resolution was referred to the Council by the House of Delegates. The resolution was forwarded to the MSSNY Infectious Diseases Committee for further study and recommendation for the MSSNY Council's consideration.

RESOLVED that the Medical Society of the State of New York reaffirm MSSNY Policy 312.973 Childhood Vaccinations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that MSSNY advocate for minors under age 18 be permitted to consent to vaccination without the consent of a parent or guardian; and be it further

RESOLVED, that MSSNY urge that New York State provide incentives to parents/guardians who vaccinate their children as a strategy to improve vaccine uptake in school-aged children; and be it further

RESOLVED, that MSSNY advocate that New York State develop programs to pay stipends to community health workers as a strategy to improve vaccine uptake in school-aged children.

At the MSSNY House of Delegates, testimony was received that was supportive of this resolution, however, concerns were expressed that rather than a blanket exception for minors under the age of 18, that the resolution be amended to include the "mature minor" concept. Under this provision, the physician and/or health care provider makes the decision as to whether the minor has the maturity to make the medical decision. There was also discussion on the floor regarding this issue and the resolution was ultimately referred to the MSSNY Council.

MSSNY Council referred the resolution back to the Infectious Disease Committee and the committee discussed this matter on October 17, 2019. It was noted that the majority of the resolution was accepted by the House. Discussion revolved around the mature minor concept—whereby the physician makes the decision as to whether the minor has maturity. It was also noted that this resolution was drafted by the Infectious Disease Committee in February 2019, in part due to the increase in measles case and was considered by the HOD in April 2019. It was noted that the first resolve has been accomplished with the recent changes to the Public Health Law—to repeal non-medical exemptions. There was discussion about the June 13, 2019 implementation of the new law that medical exceptions are the only exceptions for school-based immunizations that are now allowed in New York State. While committee members expressed support to the concept that "mature" minors should be able to consent to immunizations, the committee believed that the new requirements have caused concerns within some portion of the population. Committee members felt that it was

important for MSSNY to emphasize why vaccines are important to everyone's health and that MSSNY should work closely with the New York State Department of Health on ensuring that all children are appropriately immunized. Committee members also believe that approving the second resolve, at this time, could potentially antagonize parents and patients. There was also discussion that MSSNY should revisit this issue in the future, after it has received data on the impact on the new law. Thus, committee members recommend that the first and second resolve be eliminated and that the rest of the resolution be adopted as follows:

RESOLVED, that MSSNY urge that New York State provide incentives to parents/guardians who vaccinate their children as a strategy to improve vaccine uptake in school-aged children; and be it further

RESOLVED, that MSSNY advocate that New York State develop programs to pay stipends to community health workers as a strategy to improve vaccine uptake in school-aged children.

(FOR COUNCIL ACTION)

MSSNY Policy 312.973 Childhood Vaccinations The Medical Society of the State of New York supports the repeal of all non-medical exemptions for childhood vaccinations prior to attending school in New York State. (Adopted Council 11/5/2015; Reaffirmed HOD 2016-163)