



ACIP Public Comments, July 29, 2020

Good afternoon my name is Claire Hannan and I have the privilege to serve as the Executive Director of the Association of Immunization Managers, the very individuals in public health agencies that strive daily to ensure the timely immunization of every child, teen and adult in this nation. My comments are based on 23 years of working in public health, where I've had the opportunity to learn from federal, state and local health officials and to partner with public health advocates.

I am grateful to the ACIP for asking the important questions, collecting and analyzing the critical data, and holding open review sessions for the public.

As Dr. Messonnier stated, a successful COVID-19 vaccination campaign depends on so much more than clear recommendations from ACIP. Vaccine allocation, distribution, administration and tracking will not happen without careful planning and coordination between all levels of government.

Funding for CDC and state and local public health agencies is urgently needed. Public Health Departments at all levels are stretched thin – staff with immunization expertise have been pulled into other aspects of pandemic response, and some have been furloughed due to state fiscal deficits. Additional resources are sorely needed to build and implement the Covid immunization program that will follow from the ACIP guidance.

Coordinated planning between CDC, Operation Warp Speed, and state and local public health agencies is needed immediately, as Dr. Nancy Messonnier stated.

There are critical unknowns that must be addressed:

- Will allocation of vaccine doses and vaccine ordering be conducted through the existing CDC distribution system? Precisely what role will the Department of Defense and the military play?
- Will the vaccine be provided free of charge to all Americans, with no out-of-pocket costs regardless of insurance status?
- What data elements will vaccine providers be required to report to states, and what elements will states be required to report to CDC?
- What kind of public engagement and communication plans are in place to assure the public will accept the vaccine and trust the oversight systems ensuring ongoing safety and effectiveness?

These are just a few of the important logistical issues that public health agencies are grappling with as we race to prepare in advance of vaccine implementation.

Immunization program managers and their partners in public health agencies stand ready to work with representatives from Operation Warp Speed and CDC. I was pleased to hear Dr. Messonnier mention more concrete microplanning and CDC technical assistance. We welcome this. Every awardee needs this collaboration with CDC to begin now with a sense of urgency.

We are all in this together. As we face the greatest public health challenge of the century, we will all rise to the occasion. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Claire Hannan, MPH

Executive Director

Association of Immunization Managers (AIM)

301-424-6080

[Website](#) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#)