



May 27, 2004

Steve Cochi, MD
Acting Director, National Immunization Program
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Rd, NE, Mailstop E-52
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Dr. Cochi:

The Association of Immunization Managers, representing state, local and urban area immunization grantees, is writing to offer assistance and collaboration as the National Immunization Program (NIP) works to implement the number of strategic and re-structuring initiatives taking place at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Immunization is a vital part of the public health system and as a program has accomplished tremendous successes. We believe that lessons learned from these successes, along with the valuable experience of immunization programs at the state and local levels, can contribute to the future success and direction of CDC/NIP.

Recently, program managers were informed of future changes involving immunization registries – federal funding sources and the need to be in compliance with the Public Health Information Network (PHIN) standards. These announcements at the National Immunization Conference came as a surprise to program managers and to AIM.

We appreciate the information regarding the revised federal funding protocol for immunization registries and request that state and local immunization program managers and AIM be kept current regarding changes in funding oversight.

We agree with the goal of integrating and ensuring compatibility of data systems. However, these changes may have profound impact on state and local immunization registries and programs. Therefore, it is critical that the CDC work with state and local public health agencies on the implementation of PHIN standards and how they will relate to immunization registries. We believe there is much to be gained from the years of experience that immunization registries have in working to develop standards and to integrate these standards with other data systems and our partners such as private providers, schools, and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) clinics.

Communication among program managers, AIM, and the National Immunization Program will enhance the success and implementation of changes in immunization

registry funding and PHIN compliance. We appreciate your ongoing participation on conference calls and your regular e-mail communications with AIM and immunization grantees. We hope that we can use these venues to continue and enhance communication and to provide you with input and expertise on issues affecting immunization programs.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with you to sustain and increase immunization coverage rates in the face of these new challenges and opportunities.

Sincerely,

Beth Rowe-West, Chair

Claire Hannan, Executive Director

cc: Lance Rodewald, CDC/NIP
Nancy Fasano, CDC/NIP
Terry Boyd, CDC/PHPPO