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Baker-Polito Administration Proclaims August Immunization Awareness Month

Waltham, Massachusetts – August 2, 2021 – The Baker-Polito Administration has proclaimed August 2021 to be Immunization Awareness Month to remind Massachusetts’ citizens about the importance of immunization at all ages.

Efforts to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, such as stay-at-home and shelter-in-place orders, have led to a decrease in routine preventive medical services, including immunizations. The resulting dangerous decline in immunization during the pandemic has put children and communities at risk for preventable diseases and outbreaks. While signs of recovery from pandemic-related disruptions to routine vaccination have recently been observed, ensuring immunization services are reinitiated and maintained is essential for protecting individuals and communities. And with the 2021-2022 influenza season approaching, protecting vulnerable populations, and reducing burdens on the healthcare system through influenza vaccination will be critical.

The Administration’s proclamation was praised by the Massachusetts Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (MCAAP). MCAAP president, Lloyd Fisher, MD, FAAP, noted, “As pediatricians we have seen a concerning decrease in immunization rates due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is critical that medical providers and parents work together to ensure that all children receive all the recommended vaccines in a timely manner. We are so pleased that the Baker-Polito administration has recognized through this proclamation the importance of immunizations to the public health of the Commonwealth.”

The Massachusetts Adult Immunization Coalition (MAIC) wants Massachusetts citizens to recognize that vaccines are an important part of helping adults stay healthy. “Vaccines are not only important for children to receive, but also they are important for adults to receive, too,” says Amy Sgueglia, MSN, RN of the Massachusetts Adult Immunization Coalition. "All adult healthcare providers, including specialists, should make conversations about immunizations a routine part of each patient visit. A strong recommendation from a trusted healthcare professional is a key predictor of patients getting needed vaccines." She encourages adults, especially those with chronic conditions, to ask their healthcare providers if they need any vaccines.

Now in its 27th year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched National Immunization Awareness Month as an annual observance to raise awareness about the importance of immunization at all ages. Massachusetts joins CDC and other states in protecting its citizens against vaccine preventable diseases by supporting a strong and vital immunization program.

The MCAAP is a member organization of over 1,700 pediatricians committed to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. To this end, the members of the Academy dedicate their efforts and resources.

MAIC is a collaborative partnership dedicated to increasing adult immunization through education, networking, and sharing innovative and best practices. There are currently over 300 members representing local and state public health organizations, community health centers, health insurance plans, pharmacies, physicians, vaccine manufacturers, long-term-care and senior service organizations, consumer advocacy groups, hospitals, home health, and college health services.

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