

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Resolution HHS-17-32

A RESOLUTION ON MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE AWARENESS

WHEREAS, meningococcal disease is any infection caused by the bacterium *Neisseria meningitides*, or meningococcus;

WHEREAS, 1 in 10 people are carriers for these bacteria with no signs or symptoms of disease, sometimes *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria can cause illness;

WHEREAS, meningococcal disease is spread from person to person via the exchange of the bacteria through respiratory and throat secretion during close or lengthy contact;

WHEREAS, in the U.S., there are approximately 1,000 to 1,200 cases of meningococcal disease that occur each year;

WHEREAS, 10 to 15 percent of infected individuals will die, while 11 to 19 percent of those who live will suffer from serious morbidity, including loss of limbs and impacts to the nervous system;

WHEREAS, infants under one year of age, as well as young adults between the ages of 16 and 21, are most commonly impacted by this disease;

WHEREAS, there are different strains or serogroups of *Neisseria meningitidis*, with serogroups B, C, and Y accounting for most meningococcal diseases in the US;

WHEREAS, there have been several recent outbreaks of serogroup B meningococcal disease on college campuses, with some cases resulting in death;

WHEREAS, there are vaccines that help provide protection against all three serogroups (B, C, and Y) commonly seen in the United States;

WHEREAS, vaccination for serogroups A, C, W and Y is routinely recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC);

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends that decisions to vaccinate adolescents and young adults 16 through 23 years of age against serogroup B meningococcal disease should be made at the individual level with health care providers;

WHEREAS, it is critical that students, parents, educators, and health care providers understand the dangers of meningitis B and are aware that a vaccine is available to prevent disease resulting from this serogroup; and

WHEREAS, the recent incidence of meningococcal disease has served as a reminder of the critical role vaccinations play in helping to prevent this devastating illness.

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators take all reasonable steps to urge all private and public high schools, colleges, and universities to provide information to all students and parents about meningococcal disease, explaining the different disease serogroups, symptoms, risks, and treatment;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such information shall also include a notice of availability, benefits, risks, and limitations of all meningococcal vaccines receiving a recommendation from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, including Category A and Category B recommendations, with specific information as to those persons at higher risk for the disease;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each private and public high school, college, and university shall recommend that current and entering students receive meningococcal vaccines in accordance with current Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices guidelines.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and other federal and state government officials as appropriate.

SPONSOR: Senator Donne E. Trotter (IL)

Committee of Jurisdiction: Health and Human Services Policy Committee

Certified by Committee Co-Chair: Representative Mia Jones (FL)

Ratified in Plenary Session: Ratification Date is December 3, 2016

Ratification is certified by: Senator Catherine Pugh (MD), President