

NEW YORK STATE IMMUNIZATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
 MINUTES OF MARCH 26, 2026 MEETING
 12:30 p.m.- 2:30 p.m.

Council Members: Dr. Debra Tristram, Elie Ward, Dr. Gus Birkhead, Dr. Govind Rao

NYSDOH Staff Members: Heide Reukauf, Aleef Rahman, Kara Connelly, Dr. Vajeera Dorabawila, Anike Shaw, Jeremy Heisey, Kelly Brady, Lyndsey Hoyt, Dileep Sarecha, Maxine Goldberg, Deborah Sobieszek, Gia Dublino, Mari Sepowski, Rebecca Domalewicz, Ana Juras, Jennifer Wohlfarht, Ariela Zamcheck, Jonnie Martin, Barb Joyce, Aleef Rahman, Chelsea Cottrell, Eric Buckley, Avi Lekram, Rick Goldfarb, Elizabeth Boos, Lori Isabella-Rhoades, Delia Easton, Jonathan Karmel

NYCDOHMH Staff Members: Bindy Crouch

Invited Guest: Agenda Item	Discussion	Follow-Up
<p>Welcome / Chair's Remarks: Dr. Debra Tristram</p> <p>Council member update: Ellie Ward</p>	<p>November minutes could not be approved as there was not a quorum. Minutes will be sent out to members via email for approval.</p> <p>Open discussion: The council sent a letter of support to Commissioner McDonald standing ready to assist with any immunization and vaccine confidence efforts and supporting the continuation of strong immunization requirements in New York. The Commissioner acknowledged receipt and thanked the members for the letter. A similar letter was sent to and acknowledged by the Governor.</p> <p>The AAP held and advocacy day that was successful, students were happy to meet with representatives.</p> <p>Allison Singer and Ellie Ward spoke with members of the Assembly and Senate who sponsored legislation that will update Public Health law 2164. Passed the Senate and is in Committee in the Assembly A.9060C/S08496C. No financial cost to the legislation so it does not need to be tied up in the Budget process.</p> <p>Ellie Ward suggests the Council write a letter of support for the bill, believes it is a strong piece of legislation. The council asks the Department of Health to check with legal to ensure there are no issues with writing a letter of support. Gus Birkhead agrees the legislation is strong, Community Health</p>	

	Centers are supportive. Hopeful it will be passed after the budget. Council will move forward with letters of support if/when DOH legal approves.	
Clinical/ACIP Updates Dr. Ariela Zamcheck	<p>This year there have been some irregularities in the scheduling of ACIP meetings. The most recent meetings that were scheduled for March 18 and March 19 were cancelled after the court ruling of AAP vs Kennedy which was issued out of Massachusetts Federal Court. The main takeaways from this ruling included a vaccine stay/freeze which halted all the changes that had cut the recommended childhood vaccines for some vaccines such as Hep A and B, Rotavirus, and flu. Those HHS schedule changes were blocked. The ACIP appointments to the Committee were also blocked due to allegations that some of the appointees were vaccine skeptics and many not having significant immunization experience or history. The ruling also invalidated the previous votes of this ACIP committee. The Federal Government is expected to appeal. This case will continue and might make it to the Supreme Court. This doesn't affect anything for New York State immunizations at this point. Also of note, the Vice Chair Robert Malone resigned.</p> <p>The NYS DOH recently sent out a Dear Colleague letter to providers due to the extended RSV season. RSV monoclonal antibodies are appropriately extended to April 30, 2026. Insurance must cover, and we will continue to monitor the RSV season. Arexvy has been approved by the FDA for adults ages 18 to 49 with high-risk conditions like COPD, Asthma, congestive heart failure, diabetes, and kidney disease and this is to prevent RSV associated lower respiratory tract disease. The CDC has not yet approved or updated their clinical guidance. Insurers will have one year post CDC approval to cover the vaccine.</p> <p>A measles update to date in 2026, there have been four cases in New York State. The Department continues to monitor all cases. The Executive order 52 that allows pharmacists to administer Covid-19 vaccine to healthy adults has been extended through April and will allow access to more New Yorkers looking to be vaccinated. Also to watch, an executive order is set to expire April 19 that allows pharmacists to administer Covid-19 vaccine to children.</p>	

<p>New York City Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene Update Dr. Crouch</p>	<p>Dr. Alister F. Martin, MD, MPP, was appointed Commissioner of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, appointed by Mayor Zohran Mamdani in January. There was a productive hearing with the New York City Council surrounding vaccine access for children. New York City has launched a new children vaccine campaign. It's called ask questions, get answers, vaccinate. It will be paid media, social media, and the campaign is also being run in provider offices. There are palm card handouts available, QR code to the website, etc. The video can be viewed on YouTube and is in several languages. All VFC providers and urgent care centers can receive posters.</p> <p>Funding for the immunization program from the federal government targets stayed steady for the next funding period. New York City is also monitoring any measles cases. Data regarding measles is posted to the NYC DOH website.</p>	
<p>Vaccine Program Update Lyndsey Hoyt</p>	<p>Looking forward to NY's cooperative agreement with the CDC, for 24-25 season the vaccines for children's program had about 325,000 doses ordered, and this year to date there has been 344,000 doses, so a slight increase, and stable ordering for adults around 20,000 doses. Flu vaccine orders remained but Covid-19 vaccine order was down about 50% compared to last year. Based on RSV activity in New York State right now, New York State and New York City both made a recommendation to continue administering RSV monoclonal antibodies to infants. Normally the seasonal recommendation is for October-March.</p> <p>VFC has come up with a new enrollment application for new providers to join VFC and VFA. This will be launched shortly, training materials are still in development. VFC providers are in the annual review period to confirm information is correct. VFC will be offering live training this year to fulfill the training requirements from the CDC to participate in the program.</p> <p>The CDC has announced that starting in July 2027 jurisdictions will have to pay cost sharing for vaccine doses purchased with CHIP or state funds. So right now, any jurisdiction that distributes vaccines for a population that's not federal eligible, so not the VFC eligibility, those doses are covered on the CDC centralized distribution contract. The CDC will require states to start covering parts of this cost, this will affect New York State. Estimates of costs are coming.</p>	
<p>NYSIIS Update Vajeera Dorabawila</p>	<p>NYS conducted some focus groups with local health departments to identify system gaps. Many LHDs indicated they weren't familiar with all the functions of NYSIIS, so a presentation was done in Jan. Work continues on a public dashboard that will be at county level.</p>	

	Looking at data from 4313314 series coverage in 2-year-old children by their 2 nd birthday in NYS outside of NYC, rates are holding steady. There was a small dip last summer but it has leveled back out. Statewide range is 61.3%, counties ranged from 37%-78% coverage. Flu doses are about the same as last year, Covid-19 vaccination rates are down.	
New Business: Dr. Debra Tristram	Meetings set for 2026: August 27, 2026 October 29, 2026	
Adjournment:	The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 pm.	