

1 INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2017-079

2
3 REQUESTING THAT THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE,
4 AND LABOR STUDY METHODS TO ENHANCE ACCESS TO IMMUNIZATIONS IN
5 ARKANSAS BY OVERCOMING CHALLENGES TO IMMUNIZATION ACCESS.
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7 WHEREAS, Arkansas has low rates of immunization among citizens across
8 the state and often has the lowest rates of immunization across the nation;
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11 WHEREAS, in 2015, among Arkansas's children, only sixty-six percent
12 (66%) of children between the ages of nineteen to thirty-five (19-35) months
13 old received vaccinations, compared with seventy-one and six-tenths percent
14 (71.6%) nationally; and
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16 WHEREAS, the Arkansas Immunization Action Coalition has identified
17 several challenges that affect the current immunization process in Arkansas:

18 1. Immunization data is incomplete, making true immunization
19 rates by provider site or geographical area difficult to determine because:

20 A. Only twenty-five percent (25%) of immunization
21 providers are currently reporting data; and

22 B. Data from other states is not electronically reported
23 to the Arkansas state database;

24 2. Families lack access to immunization services due to the low
25 number of public and private immunization providers in Arkansas and because
26 those providers are located inequitably across the state;

27 3. Parents often have difficulty determining which vaccines
28 their children need as:

29 A. Many parents who intend to vaccinate their children are
30 unaware of recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization
31 Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and how to access
32 vaccines and immunizations;

33 B. Some parents choose alternative immunization schedules
34 based on misinformation; and

35 C. Increased numbers of parents are requesting
36 philosophical exemptions for vaccines required for school attendance;

1 4. Medical providers face barriers to offering immunizations due
2 to:

3 A. Increasing requirements by the Vaccines for Children
4 Program and the State Children's Health Insurance Program;

5 B. Increasing costs of purchasing, storing, tracking, and
6 administering the immunizations;

7 C. Stagnating reimbursement rates for vaccine purchasing
8 and administering; and

9 D. Limiting scope of practice state laws regarding the
10 administration of immunizations to certain age groups;

11 5. Daycares and schools frequently do not achieve student
12 compliance with immunization requirements; and

13 6. Current efforts to improve immunization rates and quality of
14 care need better coordination and collaboration; and

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16 WHEREAS, the Arkansas Medicaid Program does not provide coverage and
17 reimbursement for:

- 18 1. All recommended immunizations for adult patients;
19 2. Any immunization administration fees for adult patients; and
20 3. Immunizations administered through a pharmacy as point-of-
21 care claims; and

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23 WHEREAS, access to immunizations and increased immunization rates can
24 improve the overall health outcomes of the citizens of Arkansas; and

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26 WHEREAS, the General Assembly should pursue all efforts to improve
27 health care and health outcomes across the state,

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29 NOW THEREFORE,

30 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR OF
31 THE NINETY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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33 THAT the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor study
34 methods to enhance access to immunization in Arkansas by overcoming
35 challenges to immunization access.

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1 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT, upon request, the Arkansas Immunization
2 Action Coalition, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of
3 Health provide assistance to the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare,
4 and Labor to perform this study.

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6 Respectfully submitted,

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10 Representative Justin Boyd

11 District 77

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14 By: JMB/JMB

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