

Legislative and Policy Update

2019 Legislative Session

The 2019 legislative session started on January 14th and will go through April this year. The Department is not proposing any new immunization legislation this year. So far this session, there has been one immunization-related bill introduced:

[House Bill 1019](#) – *Vaccination and antibody titer test notification.*

(<http://lawfilesex.t.leq.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/House%20Bills/1019.pdf>)

Requires health care providers to notify patients, prior to vaccine administration, of the option to get serologic proof of immunity in lieu of vaccination. It would also require health care providers to notify the patient, or in the case of a child, the parent, that there is no state requirement for vaccination or proof of immunity except for the attendance of a child at school or child care and in those settings exemptions from requirements are available. In addition, documented laboratory evidence of a positive antibody titer would satisfy the state school and child care entry immunization requirement for that disease.

The Department submitted legislative request proposals for 2019 to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) in September of 2018. This was the first step of the process. All final proposals must be approved by the Governor prior to submission to the legislature. Policy legislation and budget proposals can be found on the [Department website](#) at:

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/AboutUs/LegislativeProposals>.

As part of the overall proposal, the Department put forth a Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) package to the Governor for his consideration that included funding requests to help reduce communicable disease, assessment, and environmental health threats. Currently, the local, tribal, and state governmental public health system is failing to provide the most basic, core public health services necessary to adequately protect and promote the health of all Washington residents. This proposal takes a multi-year approach to fully funding the FPHS gaps, starting with funding communicable disease, environmental public health, and assessment services.

Modernization of Chapter 70.24 RCW Control and Treatment of Sexually Transmitted Diseases

The End AIDS Washington report (PDF) recommend modernizing Washington's HIV laws to reflect current science and reduce HIV-related stigma. Washington's laws related to HIV/AIDS primarily sit within Chapter 70.24 RCW, Control and Treatment of Sexually Transmitted Disease.

Many parts of the statute have not been updated, since they were enacted in 1988. The law is outdated and inconsistent with current state and national best practices. The Department of Health

has developed proposed agency request legislation to update and modernize Washington’s laws, while reducing HIV/AIDS exceptionalism and HIV stigma.

This bill is expected to be introduced this session. More information about the proposed modernization of this law can be found on the department webpages at <https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/HIV/EndAIDSWashington>.

Information about the legislature including schedules, proposed bills, such as the ones discussed above, committees, and other information about the current session can be found on the Washington State Legislature website at: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/>.

School and Child Care Immunization Compliance Rulemaking

The State Board of Health and the Department convened a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in October 2018 to review and discuss conditional status; the 30 day grace period that allows kids who do not have documentation of immunization status or who are not fully immunized to attend school while they are making satisfactory progress towards full immunization or completing an exemption form.

In 2016, the Board was petitioned by school nurses to change the rule to require compliance on or before the first day of school. They stated that the current rule creates an administrative burden due to increased tracking of students in conditional status. At the time, the Board decided not to change the rule but to continue discussions with stakeholders around strategies to help reduce the administrative burden and decide if further rulemaking is needed.

The next step in the rulemaking process is to file the proposed language with the code reviser’s office so that the Board can send out notification to interested parties that they will be accepting comments on the rule language before it goes before the Board in June.

Clinical and Quality Assurance

Immunize Washington campaign in progress



The Health Plan Partnership is once again sponsoring the 2019 Immunize WA Provider Recognition Program. Clinics and providers are encouraged to nominate themselves for recognition through **February 17th, 2019**. All nominees who have achieved immunization rates of 70% or higher qualify. More details can be found at: www.immunizewa.org.

UW health publication sheds light on maternal mortality reviews

[Northwest Public Health magazine](http://www.northwestpublichealth.org/) (<http://www.northwestpublichealth.org/>), published by the University of Washington School Of Public Health and produced by the Northwest Center for Public Health Practice, featured the work of our maternal mortality reviews in its latest issue. “[Maternal Deaths: The Tip of the Iceberg](http://www.northwestpublichealth.org/2018/features/maternal-deaths-the-tip-of-the-iceberg)” (<http://www.northwestpublichealth.org/2018/features/maternal-deaths-the-tip-of-the-iceberg>) shares data from the 2014 and 2015 maternal mortality review and

includes comments from Office Director Lacy Fehrenbach and was supported with a background interview with Health Service Consultant Alexis Bates.

New Article on Flu Vaccination and Cancer Patients and Their Caregivers

Sara Podczervinski and Kim MacLeod from the Department of Health were co-authors on a manuscript just published in the *American Journal of Infection Control* entitled “Understanding influenza vaccination rates and reasons for refusal in caregivers and household contacts of cancer patients.” ([https://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196-6553\(18\)31024-1/fulltext](https://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196-6553(18)31024-1/fulltext))

The article highlighted flu vaccination efficacy in cancer patients, vaccination recommendations for caregivers and family members of high-risk patients, vaccine uptake in caregivers and family members, and needed efforts in targeting vaccination for caregivers and family of cancer patients.

Vaccine Supply and Distribution

2019 Vaccine Loss Policy

In 2018, DOH partnered with stakeholders to review and update the Vaccine Loss Policy. Much consideration and thought has been invested in supporting best practices in vaccine storage, handling, and accountability to improve the Childhood Vaccine Program. Providers will review and sign the policy annually, in conjunction with provider agreement renewals. For questions regarding the policy please contact Megan at wachildhoodvaccines@doh.wa.gov.

Provider Survey Results



We heard you.

Many of you were among the 475 providers from 33 local health jurisdictions in 37 Washington state counties who responded last August to our

2018 Vaccine Program Provider Survey

Although we heard from folks in almost every county, most of you are in *King County* (30%), with *Pierce* (11%) and *Snohomish* (10%) being the two other counties with the highest number of participants.

We received some great feedback from you. Here's what you told us:



Though most of the feedback was positive, we did receive some helpful comments and recommendations on how we can improve the program.

We noted some suggestions and concerns regarding the availability of Department of Health staff for addressing provider questions and issues. The majority of inquiries (29.5%) were addressed and resolved the following day (see table below). Over the next year, the program aims to improve response time.

Department of Health Response Time For Answering Questions and Problems



Health Promotion and Communication Updates

In the next few weeks, a reminder/recall mailing will go out to parents of children who haven't recently gotten a flu shot. Half of those we send to will get a customized, flashy mailing and the other half will get a plainer, simple letter without customization. We will track how many kids from each group end up getting a flu shot and use it to test for effective techniques. This work is funded by a grant from Group Health Foundation.

Another project the Group Health Foundation grant is covering is to test to see if it's possible to expand the Child Profile Health Promotion system to the state's kids past age 6. We'll be sending out a mailing to parents of children ages 10 to 18 to see how accurate the address data is in the IIS and see how likely parents in this group are to take action on something they get in the mail.

We recently announced the Washington State 2018 HPV Vaccine is Cancer Prevention Champion! Polyclinic Pediatrics has been recognized by the CDC, the Association of American Cancer Institutes, and the American Cancer Society for their leadership and innovation in improving HPV vaccination rates. Led by Dr. Sherri Zorn, quality improvement strategies within the practice and significant advocacy across the state have made Polyclinic Pediatrics a leader in promoting HPV vaccination to protect adolescent health. You can read more at www.cdc.gov/hpv/champions.

One last quick reminder – if you haven't gotten your flu shot yet and aren't sure where to go, visit knockoutflu.org and our easy widget will help you find the closest place to you.



Immunization Information System (IIS)



OICP Provider Outreach Supervisor Elected to the American Immunization Registry Association Board of Directors

Dannette Dronenburg, Provider Outreach Supervisor in the Office of Immunization and Child Profile, was elected to the [American Immunization Registry Association \(AIRA\)](https://www.immregistries.org/) Board of Directors for a one year term starting November 1, 2018 through October 31, 2019. AIRA exists to support and promote the use of immunization information to ensure healthy communities through the development and implementation of immunization information systems as a crucial tool in preventing vaccine-

preventable diseases. This is an exciting opportunity & will help ensure WA remains connected with the national IIS community.

IIS Help Desk Satisfaction & Training Assessment Survey

OICP staff conduct an IIS Help Desk satisfaction survey every year to gauge how our IIS Help Desk is meeting the needs of our end users. The IIS Help Desk is contracted through our vendor, Scientific Technologies Corporation (STC) and act as our front line help desk support to all IIS users in Washington. On average the Help Desk handles around 1,000 calls per month and only about 10-15% of the calls require further triaging to advanced support by OICP staff.

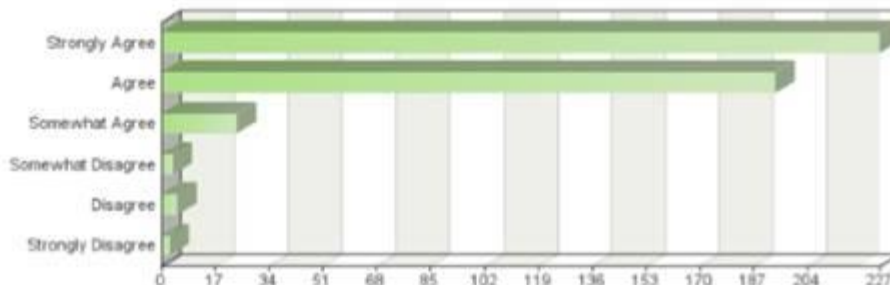
This year's survey was taken by 406 users. We've asked similar Help Desk questions for the last three years and every year the results continue to improve in terms of professionalism, knowledge, and the Help Desk's ability to understand, resolve, and/or triage issues to OICP staff. We still have areas to improve, but it's encouraging to see an increase in positive responses to these questions over time.

OICP also conducts a training assessment each year with our IIS end users to determine what IIS functional areas they need training in and to determine their preferred training methods. This year, we combined these two surveys into one so as to not overburden providers in Washington.

See the graphs below for some of the help desk highlights from the survey results. If you have any questions, please contact dannette.dronenburg@doh.wa.gov

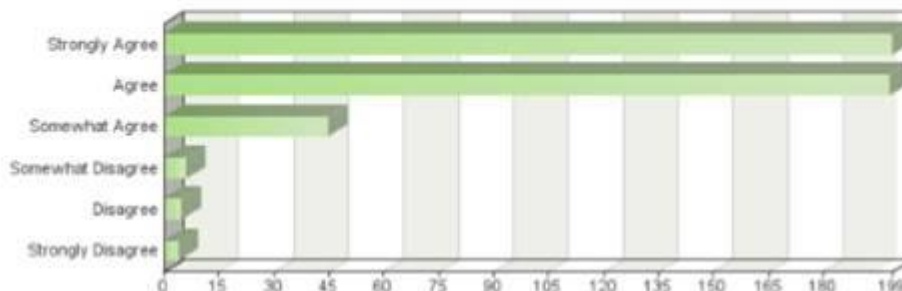
Question 1

IIS Help Desk staff are professional and courteous in their communications (by phone, email, and chat).



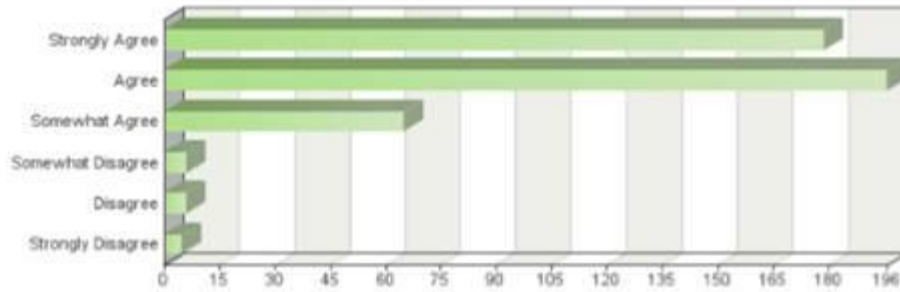
Question 2

IIS Help Desk staff are knowledgeable about the system.



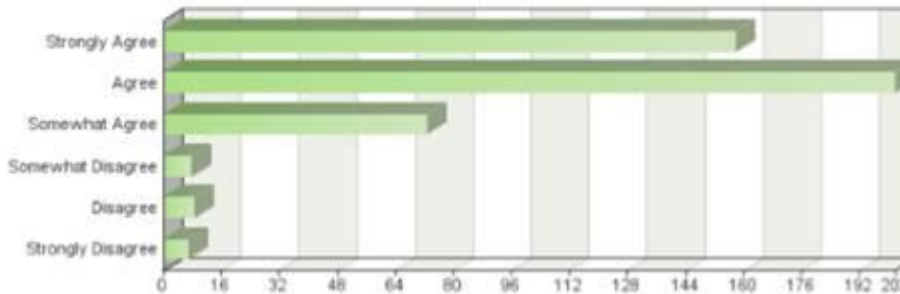
Question 3

IIS Help Desk staff are able to understand the IIS issues I'm experiencing.



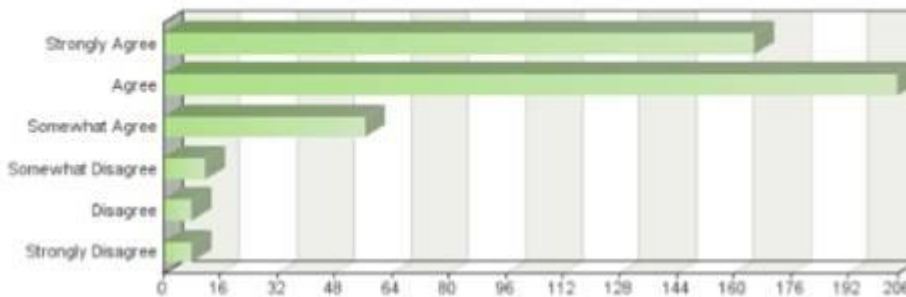
Question 4

IIS Help Desk staff are able to identify what's causing the IIS issues I'm experiencing.



Question 5

IIS Help Desk staff are able to help resolve the IIS issues I'm experiencing.



Question 6

When IIS Help Desk staff can't resolve my issues immediately, they direct me to someone that can help.

