



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Larry Hogan, Governor - Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor - Van Mitchell, Secretary

---

June 10, 2016

Dear Colleague,

We are writing to ask for your help in addressing the critical public health issue of under-vaccination of Maryland's adolescents against the Human Papillomavirus (HPV). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 14 million people, including teens, become infected with the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) each year, posing a significant public health risk. HPV is a common virus that can cause cervical cancer in women and penile cancer in men. HPV can also cause anal cancer, genital warts and oropharyngeal cancer in both men and women. According to the CDC, throat cancer which includes the base of the tongue and tonsils, is the most common HPV-associated cancer in men.

The HPV vaccine is recommended for preteen boys and girls at age 11 or 12 because it produces a more robust immune response during the preteen years, and to provide protection *before exposure* to the virus. The HPV vaccine has been shown to be very effective in preventing HPV. However, current data from the 2014 CDC National Immunization Survey, shows only 39% of girls and 25% of boys receive three doses of the HPV vaccine in Maryland.

We are encouraging physicians, dentists, Local Health Departments, and parents of children around the state to take part in increasing HPV vaccination coverage in Maryland. As a dentist, you can join this statewide effort and help to prevent cancer by encouraging family members visiting your office with age-eligible children to initiate and/or complete the full series of the HPV vaccine. Your recommendation may likely be one of the greatest influencing factors in a parent's decision to have their children vaccinated against HPV. We encourage you to provide information, and discuss the benefits of HPV vaccination with parents of age-eligible children. Additionally, CDC research has shown that many parents do not know that the full vaccine series requires 3 shots. Your encouraging parents to make appointments for their children with their physician for all three shots in the series, will help them to complete the series. To assist your efforts, please access the promotional materials listed in the table below for your HPV vaccination awareness efforts. The fact sheets may be used by providers in conversations with parents, and the video/radio PSAs may be used in provider office waiting rooms. All of the toolkit materials are available at no cost by visiting <http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/cancer/Pages/HPV.aspx>, or by visiting the individual links listed in the table on page 2.

<b>Fact Sheet for Parents (English)</b> <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/teen/hpv-indepth-color.pdf">http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/teen/hpv-indepth-color.pdf</a>
<b>Fact Sheet for Parents (Spanish)</b> <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/teen/hpv-indepth-color-sp.pdf">http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/teen/hpv-indepth-color-sp.pdf</a>
<b>30 second PSA video about HPV (English)</b> <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/ncird/media/resources/index.html">https://www.cdc.gov/ncird/media/resources/index.html</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Click on the “Adolescent” tab</li><li>• Scroll for 3 HPV vaccine PSAs</li></ul>
<b>30 second PSA video about HPV (Spanish)</b> <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/ncird/media/resources/index.html">https://www.cdc.gov/ncird/media/resources/index.html</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Click on the “Spanish” tab</li><li>• Scroll to the first video</li></ul>
<b>15 second Radio PSA about HPV (English)</b> <a href="http://www2c.cdc.gov/podcasts/player.asp?f=8630170">http://www2c.cdc.gov/podcasts/player.asp?f=8630170</a>
<b>30 second Radio PSA about HPV (English)</b> <a href="http://www2c.cdc.gov/podcasts/player.asp?f=8630172">http://www2c.cdc.gov/podcasts/player.asp?f=8630172</a>
<b>30 second Radio PSA about HPV (Spanish)</b> <a href="http://www2c.cdc.gov/podcasts/player.asp?f=8630999">http://www2c.cdc.gov/podcasts/player.asp?f=8630999</a>

Thank you for all that you do to improve the health of Marylanders, and for your consideration of joining this important effort to prevent cancer by increasing the uptake of the HPV vaccination.



Van T. Mitchell  
Secretary  
Maryland Department of Health and  
Mental Hygiene



Howard M. Haft, M.D.  
Deputy Secretary, Public Health Services  
Maryland Department of Health and  
Mental Hygiene