

March 5, 2023

Re: AB 659¹ (Aguiar-Curry, Weiner); HPV vaccine mandate for all public and private schools in California, with no religious or conscientious exemption

Position: Oppose

Dear California Legislators,

On behalf of Physicians for Informed Consent, a 501(c)(3) educational nonprofit organization, I am writing to oppose AB 659 because it has not been scientifically proven that the HPV vaccine poses less risks than HPV infection and because HPV is sexually transmitted.

Please consider the following:

1. Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a virus, with over 200 different types, which is transmitted sexually, generally causes no symptoms, and 90% of the time resolves spontaneously within two years.^{2,3}
2. Cervical cancer, representing 0.7%⁴ of all cancers, is the most common HPV-related cancer and most frequently occurs in women aged 35–49 (average age of diagnosis is 50) — it is rarely diagnosed in women younger than 20^{5,6} and is six times more common in women with HIV.⁷ Together, Pap and HPV testing can successfully screen 95% of potential cervical cancers.⁸
3. In California, between 1999–2019, there have been about 400–500 cervical cancer deaths every year, which is a rate of about 2.1–2.9 per 100,000.⁹ Overall, 97% of deaths from HPV-related cancers are in high-risk populations (i.e., smoking, women not screened every three years, and risky sexual behavior),¹⁰ and the annual risk of an average-risk person dying from an HPV-related cancer is about 1 in 900,000.¹¹
4. The currently available HPV vaccine consists of proteins (virus-like particles) made from yeast through recombinant DNA technology for nine different types of HPV, and 500 mcg of aluminum,¹² which are injected intramuscularly in three separate doses.¹³
5. The HPV vaccine was first approved in 2006 after clinical trials; however, the placebo was not inert and contained aluminum,¹⁴ and serious adverse events have been reported,¹⁵ so its safety is controversial and currently being litigated in California.¹⁶

6. The purpose of the HPV vaccine is to prevent HPV-related genital warts and cancers and its effectiveness up to 11 years has been demonstrated.¹⁷ However, as it takes 15–20 years¹⁸ to develop cervical cancer in most women, more time and research are needed before definitive effectiveness claims can be made.
7. Since for most people the chance of dying from an HPV-related cancer is about 1 in 900,000, and safety studies of HPV vaccines include only about 25,000 subjects,¹⁹ there is not enough statistical power to conclude that the HPV vaccine is safer than the risk of HPV-related cancers.

We urge you to oppose AB 659 as the HPV vaccine has not been proven safer than HPV infection and schoolchildren are not at risk of developing HPV-related cancers.

Respectfully,



Shira Miller, M.D.
Founder and President
Physicians for Informed Consent

¹ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB659

² <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/hpv.html>

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/parents/about-hpv.html>

⁴ <https://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/html/cervix.html>

⁵ <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/cervical-cancer/about/key-statistics.html>

⁶ <https://gis.cdc.gov/Cancer/USCS/#/Demographics/>

⁷ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cervical-cancer>

⁸ <https://acsjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/cncy.21544>

⁹ <https://gis.cdc.gov/Cancer/USCS/#/Trends/>

¹⁰ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33003480/>

¹¹ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33003480/>

¹² <https://physiciansforinformedconsent.org/aluminum/>

¹³ https://www.merck.com/product/usa/pi_circulars/g/gardasil_9/gardasil_9_pi.pdf

¹⁴ https://www.merck.com/product/usa/pi_circulars/g/gardasil_9/gardasil_9_pi.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/safety-availability-biologics/gardasil-vaccine-safety>

¹⁶ <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/judge-appoints-four-lawyers-to-lead-gardasil-mdl-multidistrict-litigation-301647703.html>

¹⁷ <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/infectious-agents/hpv-vaccine-fact-sheet#how-effective-are-hpv-vaccines>

¹⁸ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cervical-cancer>

¹⁹ https://www.merck.com/product/usa/pi_circulars/g/gardasil_9/gardasil_9_pi.pdf