Executive Order Will Create More Vaccine Confusion and Put Cancer Patients, Survivors at Risk

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – The administration announced August 10 an executive order that would significantly change childhood vaccine recommendations. Vaccinations play a critical role in preventing certain cancers, promoting public health and protecting individuals with serious health conditions. ACS CAN is deeply concerned with the confusion this executive order could cause, the risk it poses to cancer patients, survivors and their families and the overall negative impact it could have on public health. An ACS CAN Survivor Views survey released earlier this year found that vaccine-related confusion is already affecting patient decision-making, with nearly 1 in 6 cancer patients and survivors reporting that they delayed or skipped a recommended vaccine due to confusion.

The following is a statement from Lisa Lacasse, president of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN.)

"Preserving strong childhood immunization systems is essential to protecting public health and ensuring that progress against cancer is not undermined. We are concerned that the executive order on vaccines will create further confusion for parents wanting to protect their children from vaccine-preventable diseases, including those that cause cancer. Children today can be protected against more diseases with the same or fewer injections than in the past, including the HPV and HepB vaccines [against human papillomavirus and hepatitis B], which prevent several types of cancers later in life. Changes to the childhood vaccine recommendations could have a sweeping impact on American public health generally and on the health of patients with cancer and their families. Any changes to vaccine schedules must, therefore, be well-considered, evidence-based and made by qualified experts in the field.

"ACS CAN supports fact-based vaccine policies that reduce the cancer burden and protect those affected by cancer through increased access and uptake of vaccines that prevent viruses that lead to cancer, like the HPV vaccine, treat cancer by boosting the immune system, and protect cancer patients and their families by maximizing community immunity."

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