

April 30, 2004

The Honourable George Smitherman
Minister of Health
Ministry of Health & Long Term Care
Hepburn Block, 10th Floor
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2CA

Dear Honourable Smitherman:

Re: Revisions to Provincial Immunization Schedule

At the April 15th meeting of the Board of Directors of the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit, discussion took place regarding the current public funding of various immunizations. Although the Ontario Government has publicly funded a significant number of vaccines for decades, there are currently three relatively new vaccines, specifically meningococcal conjugate, varicella and pneumococcal conjugate which are approved for use in Canada but are not currently publicly funded.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) has recommended that:

- all infants receive meningococcal conjugate vaccine as part of their routine immunization (October 15, 2001)
- all children 23 months of age receive pneumococcal conjugate vaccine as part of their routine immunization (January 15, 2002)
- all children between 12 and 18 months of age receive varicella vaccine as part of their routine immunization (February 15, 2002).

As a result, the following motion was passed:

that the Board of the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit support the National Advisory Committee on Immunization recommended immunization schedule and urge the Government of Ontario to include meningococcal conjugate vaccine, pneumococcal conjugate and varicella vaccine to the publicly funded childhood immunization schedule.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I trust this issue will be given due consideration.

Sincerely,

**G. Allen Heimann, MD, MHSc
Medical Officer of Health and
Secretary to the Board**

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