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## MAJOR FEDERAL ORGANIZATIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR VACCINE- AND IMMUNIZATION-RELATED ACTIVITIES

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### DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS)

**The Administration for Children and Families (ACF)** administers the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program. The Head Start program in ACF provides comprehensive educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services for low-income children between the age of 3 and the age of compulsory school attendance, and for their families. In addition, Head Start Migrant Programs serve migrant children from birth to the age of 3, and Head Start Parent and Child Centers exclusively serve children from birth to the age of 3 and pregnant women. The health component of Head Start ensures the provision of comprehensive health services, including immunizations, for all Head Start children. Head Start's Performance Standards require the assessment of current immunization status and the provision of age-appropriate immunizations for all enrolled children.

**The Health Care Financing Administration** provides national direction and oversight for the Medicare program and the State-administered Medicaid program. Immunization appropriate to age and health history is a required component of Medicaid's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) program for eligible individuals under the age of 21. The Medicare program provides coverage for pneumococcal pneumonia, influenza, and hepatitis B vaccination for beneficiaries at high and intermediate risk of infection.

### PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE (PHS)

**The National Vaccine Program Office (NVPO)** has the leadership responsibility for the Nation's vaccine development and immunization program. Specifically, the NVPO was established to "coordinate and provide direction for" each element of the immunization process: vaccine development, testing for safety and efficacy prior to licensure, licensing, production, procurement, distribution, delivery, and continued evaluation of vaccines after licensure.

**The Agency for Health Care Policy Research (AHCPR)** studies the nature, costs, and delivery of health services, including immunization. AHCPR promotes work on the identification of barriers to vaccination, including those reflecting access to health services in general, financial barriers, and the attitudes of health care providers and the general public, particularly parents. It also supports assessment of the role of data/reporting systems in ensuring delivery of vaccination, particularly to populations at risk of underimmunization.

**The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** provides national direction and leadership, project grant support, technical assistance and consultation, national surveillance, assessment, training, and epidemic investigations assistance to assist State and local health agencies in planning and implementing immunization programs. It also conducts research to improve diagnostic tests for vaccine-preventable diseases. CDC Immunization grants provided to States and some large county and city health departments are intended to assist with the purchase of adequate supplies of vaccines and to supplement State and local immunization efforts. These immunization grants currently support vaccine purchases that meet approximately half of the public-sector vaccine needs, although the proportion varies by specific vaccine. These grants also support administrative activities such as the assessment of immunization coverage, promotion of vaccination, and surveillance of disease and adverse events associated with the use of vaccines. In addition, since 1992, CDC immunization grants have been used to supplement State and local health agencies' efforts to improve vaccine delivery to the preschool population.