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**Pharmacists for Healthier Lives Releases Statement
on the Importance of Vaccinations**

Recent rise in measles cases highlights the need for immunization

Arlington, Va. – [Pharmacists for Healthier Lives](#) - a coalition of pharmacy organizations seeking to raise consumer awareness of the full range of essential healthcare services pharmacists provide each day - today released a statement expressing the coalition's commitment to immunizations that help to prevent and eliminate communicable diseases such as measles. This statement encourages every eligible person to receive a vaccination to protect themselves and their communities from these diseases.

The following is the *Pharmacists for Healthier Lives* statement on immunizations:

Immunization Statement

The recent rise in reported cases of measles in the U.S. has once again cast a spotlight on the importance of vaccinations to maintain a healthy population.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), from January 1 to June 13, 2019 there have been 1,044 confirmed cases of measles throughout 28 states. This is the greatest number of cases reported in the U.S. since 1992, before measles was declared eliminated in 2000.ⁱ

The rise of measles cases corresponds with recent data showing a reduction in the number of eligible people in the U.S. receiving vaccinations for this disease.ⁱⁱ

Even with the availability of vaccinations in the U.S., we are seeing an unfortunate rise in the number of people refusing to immunize themselves and their children due to misinformation about the safety of vaccinations.

Approved vaccines undergo rigorous testing and are proven safe for public use. There is no scientific evidence supporting claims that immunization can lead to disorders, disease or life-threatening side effects.ⁱⁱⁱ

Measles is not the only disease spread by lack of vaccinations. Each year, an estimated 40,000 to 50,000 U.S. adults die, and hundreds of thousands of others become sick or hospitalized, from vaccine-preventable diseases.^{iv} According to the CDC:

- Since 2010, flu-related hospitalizations in the United States have ranged from 140,000 to 710,000 and flu-related deaths have ranged from 12,000 to 56,000.
- About 900,000 people get pneumococcal pneumonia every year, leading to as many as 400,000 hospitalizations and 19,000 deaths.
- 700,000 to 1.4 million people suffer from chronic hepatitis B, with complications such as liver cancer. HPV causes over 27,000 cancer diagnoses in women and men each year. About 4,000 women die each year from cervical cancer.^v

Pharmacists for Healthier Lives is committed to the prevention and elimination of all communicable diseases, such as measles, by providing patient education and ensuring every eligible person receives vaccinations.

Currently, all 50 states, the District of Columbia (DC), and Puerto Rico allow for pharmacist-provided immunizations in some capacity, and more than 320,000 pharmacists have been trained to administer vaccines.^{vi}

Vaccination rates grew as states began allowing pharmacists to provide immunizations to adults in 1996.^{vii} In the CDC's most recent estimates, the number of adults receiving a vaccination by a pharmacist increased by 4 percent between 2016 and 2017 (24.3% to 28.3%) indicating more patients are receiving vaccinations from their pharmacists.^{viii}

As the medication experts on the healthcare team, pharmacists can review prescription records and, along with patient interviews, assess vaccination needs and identify patients at risk for vaccine-preventable diseases. Pharmacists can also provide counsel on the safety and efficacy of immunizations, so patients can make an informed decision about vaccinations.^{ix}

Pharmacists for Healthier Lives encourages everyone who is eligible to receive a vaccination in order to protect their health and the health of those in their community. We also encourage patients to speak to their pharmacist to learn more about the importance of immunizations for a healthier life.

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[Pharmacists for Healthier Lives \(PfHL\)](#) is a national awareness initiative aimed at highlighting the important role pharmacists play in helping people live their healthiest, happiest lives. Our goal is to educate the public about the variety of services pharmacists perform and the rigorous training they undertake to achieve the PharmD (Doctor of Pharmacy) degree, and to raise the profile of pharmacy as an essential healthcare profession.

ⁱ U.S. Centers for Disease Control, "[Measles Cases and Outbreaks, 2019](#)"

ⁱⁱ *ABC News*, "[Low Vaccination Rates a Big Factor in Ongoing Measles Outbreak](#)", January 26, 2019

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Centers for Disease Control, "[Vaccine Safety](#)", June 2016

^{iv} *Pharmacy Times*, "[Adult Vaccination Rates Are Rising but Fall Short](#)", January 21, 2019

^v Pacific Research Institute, [“Promoting Access and Lowering Healthcare: The Case for Empowering Pharmacists to Increase Adult Vaccination Rates.”](#) April 2018

^{vi} *Vaccine*, [“National survey of pharmacy-based immunization services.”](#) September 5, 2018

^{vii} *Human Vaccines and Immunotherapeutics*, [“Community pharmacies as sites of adult vaccination: A systematic review.”](#) December 2016

^{viii} *AJMC Perspectives*, [“The Essential Role of Community Pharmacies in Expanding Access to Vaccines”](#), July 2018

^{ix} *AJMC Perspectives*, [“The Essential Role of Community Pharmacies in Expanding Access to Vaccines”](#), July 2018