



American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



Alaska Chapter

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Dear Alaska Health Care Partners,

We are writing in regards to your important decision about participation in the new Alaska Vaccine Assessment Program (AVAP), as vaccines are a critical component of a sound health care strategy. Vaccine preventable disease is one of the areas of health care where clear cost-effectiveness has been demonstrated.

Although statute allows for opting out for the first 3 years, the success of this program depends on wide participation. The greatest benefit for all Alaskans will be from high vaccination rates, regardless of payor.

Payors who do not participate in AVAP put their patients at risk in several ways:

1. Vaccine **availability** may not be universal for opt-out payor covered patients.
2. Providers who accommodate AVAP and opt-out payor patients will have to maintain cumbersome **duplicate stocks** of vaccine and **separate billing processes**.
3. Providers may not be willing to accept patients of payors who require this.
4. The increase in costs necessary to maintain this duplicate system will likely incur approximately **30% higher costs** for vaccines and administration.
5. These higher expenses sustain the barriers to good rates of immunization and will contribute to higher health care costs for **vaccine preventable disease**.

When we all work together to achieve the best preventive health for Alaska's population, we minimize the costs of health care. Thank you for carefully considering your participation in the AVAP Program. As pediatricians, we strongly urge you to **opt in** to this ground-breaking program. This new strategy promises to be a win-win proposition for all stakeholders in Alaska if implementation can be streamlined and participation levels can guarantee success.

Sincerely,

Lily J. Lou, MD, FAAP
AAP-Alaska Chapter President
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