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July 18, 2022

Melinda Wharton, MD, MPH
Executive Secretary, ACIP
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road, N.E., Mailstop H24-8
Atlanta, GA 30329-4027

Grace M. Lee, MD, MPH
Chair, ACIP
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road, N.E., Mailstop H24-8
Atlanta, GA 30329-4027

Attn: July 19, 2022, ACIP Meeting [Docket No. CDC-2022-0085]

Dear Drs. Wharton and Lee:

The National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on behalf of both community and LTC independent pharmacies in response to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) [Request for Comment](#) [Docket No. CDC-2022-0085] regarding the forthcoming public advisory committee meeting on July 19, 2022.

NCPA represents America's community pharmacists, including over 19,400 independent community pharmacies. Almost half of all community pharmacies provide long-term care (LTC) services and play a critical role in ensuring patients have immediate access to medications in both community and LTC settings. Together, our members represent a \$74 billion healthcare marketplace, employ approximately 250,000 individuals, and provide an expanding set of healthcare services to millions of patients every day. Our members are small business owners who are among America's most accessible healthcare providers, especially in underserved communities. For example, while only 9 percent of the nation's primary care physicians practice in the rural areas where approximately 20 percent of the U.S. population lives, pharmacists fill this gap in patient care as 90 percent of Americans live between two and five miles of a pharmacy. Pharmacists have and continue to be critical in the fight against the spread of COVID-19—standing up mobile testing facilities, drafting protocols and response plans, reinforcing messages on how to control transmission in communities, conducting consultations, and delivering lifesaving medications to their patients. Pharmacists are critical to the distribution and uptake of COVID-19 vaccines and contribute significantly to vaccine awareness and immunization rates through patient screening and education, vaccine administration, and are vital to patient safety through accurate reporting of adverse events.

NCPA is greatly encouraged by the announcement of the SARS-CoV-2 Recombinant Spike Protein Nanoparticle Vaccine with Matrix-M1 Adjuvant vaccine candidate by Novavax, Inc., which has been shown to be 90.4 percent effective in preventing severe disease and provides protection

against multiple virus variants. The Novavax vaccine offers hope to pharmacists and other healthcare workers who have faced unprecedented challenges and risks responding to the ongoing public health emergency that has claimed the lives of nearly 500,000 people in the United States. The vaccine provides opportunity for those who are unable and unwilling to receive existing mRNA vaccines protection against SARS-CoV-2 in mild, moderate, and severe illness. As one of the most trusted healthcare professionals, pharmacists understand the fundamental importance of trust when it comes to achieving optimal outcomes. The emergency use authorization approval process is no different, and NCPA supports FDA's July 13 [decision](#) to approve the Novavax vaccine for emergency use for the prevention of COVID-19 caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in individuals 18 years of age and older. NCPA is fully confident that ACIP's review of the COVID-19 vaccine from Novavax, Inc. will continue to build public confidence in COVID-19 vaccines.

NCPA applauds Novavax, Inc. for their contributions in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, and greatly appreciates the ongoing work of CDC and ACIP to further review this vaccine.

Conclusion

We appreciate CDC's solicitation of feedback from stakeholders and looks forward to continued engagement with the agency as we work together to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at ronna.hauser@ncpa.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronna B. Hauser". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Ronna B. Hauser, PharmD
Senior Vice President, Policy & Pharmacy Affairs