



July 17, 2026

“AMGA Immunizations Brief”—brought to you by the Rise to Immunize® (RIZE) campaign—delivers vaccine news and updates relevant to healthcare leaders. This brief provides concise, actionable information to help you stay informed and guide patient care in an evolving immunization landscape.

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At a Glance

- HHS moves to create a COVID-19 vaccine injury table.
- The Senate HELP Committee held a joint hearing on the nominations of CDC Director nominee Erica Schwartz and ASPR nominee Sean Kaufman.
- New research suggests ACIP’s September 2025 decision to stop recommending MMRV for children younger than 4 could disproportionately affect lower-income families and lead to significant productivity losses.
- New research finds that the high-dose flu vaccine reduces older-adult hospitalizations.

Detailed Brief

HHS moves to create a COVID-19 vaccine injury table.

- The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is [moving forward](#) with plans to create a formal list of injuries presumed to be caused by COVID-19 vaccines, treatments, and other medical countermeasures—a step that could make it easier for some individuals to qualify for federal compensation.
 - The development of a COVID-19 injury table was first added to the federal [Unified Agenda](#) in 2023 under the Biden Administration.
- Under the proposed rule, HHS would establish a COVID-19 Countermeasures Injury Table within the [Countermeasures Injury Compensation Program](#) (CICP). The CICP [covers](#) vaccines, medications, devices, or other items used to prevent, diagnose, or treat a public health emergency.
 - The table would identify specific injuries that would be presumed to have been caused by a covered COVID-19 countermeasure if symptoms developed within a defined timeframe. HHS has not yet announced which injuries or products would be included.
- The move is part of HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.’s broader effort to reshape federal vaccine injury policy, which also includes changes to the [National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program](#), which [covers](#) routinely recommended vaccines in childhood and pregnancy.

- The federal notice indicates that the rule will be proposed in November, with the public comment period ending in January 2027.

The Senate HELP Committee held a joint hearing on the nominations of CDC Director nominee Erica Schwartz and ASPR nominee Sean Kaufman.

- On July 15, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee held a joint [hearing](#) for Erica Schwartz, MD, nominated to serve as Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and Sean Kaufman, MPH, CPH, IFBA CP, nominated to serve as the HHS Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR).
 - Schwartz, a former Deputy Surgeon General during the first Trump Administration, is the fourth person named or nominated as CDC Director since last summer. The agency is currently being overseen by National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Jay Bhattacharya, MD, PhD.
 - Kaufman would lead ASPR, which oversees the nation's preparations for public health emergencies and coordinates access to medical countermeasures including vaccines, treatments, and personal protective equipment.

New research suggests ACIP's September 2025 decision to stop recommending MMRV for children younger than 4 could disproportionately affect lower-income families and lead to significant productivity losses.

- New [research](#) published in *JAMA Network Open* suggests that the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP's) September 2025 [decision](#) to stop recommending the combined measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella (MMRV) vaccine for children younger than 4 could disproportionately affect lower-income families and children receiving care through safety-net providers.
 - Researchers found that nearly 15% of children in King County, Washington received MMRV as their first measles- or varicella-containing vaccine dose.
 - Children who received MMRV first were nearly four times as likely to receive their vaccine at a safety-net clinic and more than three times as likely to be eligible for the [Vaccines for Children](#) (VFC) program, which provides free vaccines to eligible children, including those who are Medicaid-eligible, uninsured, or underinsured.
- The ACIP decision also [excludes](#) MMRV from VFC coverage for that age group. Families must instead receive separate MMR and varicella vaccines, which could create additional logistical barriers for families and make it harder for some children to complete recommended vaccinations.
- Notably, ACIP's removal of the MMRV recommendation has been temporarily [blocked](#) as a result of the ongoing American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) [lawsuit](#) challenging federal vaccine policy changes.
- Separately, a new [report](#) from the National Association of Manufacturers found that declining MMR vaccination rates contribute to \$275 million in annual manufacturing productivity losses due to employees missing work to care for their sick children.

New research finds that the high-dose flu vaccine reduces older-adult hospitalizations.

- According to [new research](#) published in *JAMA Network Open*, a high-dose inactivated influenza vaccine (HD-IIV) is superior to a standard-dose vaccine (SD-IIV) for preventing hospitalizations for a variety of causes in adults aged 65 years and older.
- The study found a relative risk reduction of 38.5% for influenza hospitalizations, calculating the number needed to vaccinate (NNV) to prevent 1 hospitalization for influenza as 2,429.

7/28/26, 9:21 AM

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