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August 29, 2025

Dear Colleagues,

We know Illinoisans count on the Illinois Department of Public Health for guidance they can trust to protect their health and the health of their loved ones. This responsibility to ensure that you, your loved ones, and your healthcare providers have a transparent, credible voice on public health recommendations is a duty that we take very seriously.

My experience as a pediatrician and public health professional has taught me that being a transparent, credible voice means allowing the science to lead, ensuring that our recommendations are informed by the appropriate data and individual personal experiences that support our collective health. The rigor and diligence applied to such a process creates trust in the system and allows healthcare providers to know that the recommendations they receive from government and public health leaders will help, not hurt, their patients.

However, the events of this week, including the [termination of the new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Director](#) and the resignation of other senior experienced and respected leaders from the organization, provide the latest example that the current administration is continuing to disrupt the transparent, credible, science-based decision-making process that has served millions of Americans for decades. From countless studies and personal experiences, I know that vaccines save lives. The development and widespread use of vaccines is one of the world's greatest public health achievements. The public resignation of these CDC experts will make it even more difficult to understand how and why decisions are being made at the federal level, bringing disarray and distrust to the very public health systems that local and state health care providers rely on.

While IDPH and public health agencies throughout the country await formal COVID-19 recommendations from the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), these [CDC leaders who resigned confirmed](#) that they were asked to participate in an unscientific vaccine recommendation process that they believe could harm the health of Americans. These leaders validate our growing concern – the current federal administration displaying a pattern of repeated decisions about vaccines made without or in direct contradiction to scientific consensus.

Illinois needs to and will lead with a manner that ensures that health care providers and residents can trust the recommendations we make. When the administration first announced it would be adjusting its COVID-19 recommendations in late spring, I wrote a letter to all of you providing [IDPH's initial recommendations](#). However, the upcoming fall respiratory season requires new, updated analysis, and we are creating a process that is deliberately focused on credibility, transparency, and the latest evidence-informed practices.

That is why we are currently reviewing national and state data, as well as seeking guidance from medical specialty societies, state and national experts, other states, and our own Immunization Advisory

Committee (IAC). The IAC will still consider guidance from ACIP, once delivered, but also many other sources before providing IDPH with recommendations on COVID-19 vaccines and other immunizations for the fall respiratory season. IDPH will then provide our own specific guidance by the end of September to help Illinois health care providers and residents make informed decisions about vaccination and protecting themselves and their loved ones. More information on immunizations and IDPH's efforts can be found [here](#).

Illinois residents and health care providers should be assured that in Illinois, we will follow the science and data to provide the most credible, informed recommendations.

Yours in good health,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sameer Vohra". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being clearly legible.

Sameer Vohra, MD, JD, MA
Director
Illinois Department of Public Health