



# **Exploring Avenues to Enhance Information Sharing with American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribes**

**CDC/ATSDR Tribal Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, February 22, 2024**

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# Outline

- Background on NCIRD
  - NCIRD Priorities for 2024-2025
  - Upcoming Engagement on Vaccines for Children
  - The ACIP Policy Formulation Process
  - Recent Developments Related to AI/AN Recommendations
  - Discussion: Enhancing Info Sharing
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# Introduction to NCIRD and Its Priorities

Demetre C. Daskalakis, MD, MPH

## Mission of NCIRD

- Prevention of **disease, disability, and death** through **immunization** and by **control of respiratory and related diseases**
- Challenges include:
  - Balancing work in domestic and global arenas
  - **Accommodating all populations at risk for vaccine-preventable diseases** – from children to older adults
- For more information, see <https://www.cdc.gov/ncird>

## In carrying out its mission, NCIRD ...

1. **Provides leadership, expertise, and service** in laboratory and epidemiological sciences, and in immunization program delivery
  2. **Conducts applied research** on disease prevention and control
  3. **Translates research findings** into public health policies and practices
  4. **Provides diagnostic and reference laboratory services** to relevant partners
  5. **Conducts surveillance and research** to determine disease distribution, determinants, and burden nationally and internationally
  6. **Responds to disease outbreaks** domestically and abroad
  7. **Ensures that public health decisions are made objectively** and are based upon the highest quality of scientific data
  8. **Provides technical expertise, education, and training** to domestic and international partners
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## In carrying out its mission, NCIRD ... (cont'd)

9. **Provides leadership to internal and external partners** for establishing and maintaining immunization, and other prevention and control programs
10. **Develops, implements, and evaluates** domestic and international public health policies
11. **Communicates information** to increase awareness, knowledge, and understanding of public health issues domestically and internationally, and to promote effective immunization programs
12. **Aligns NCIRD's focus with** the overall strategic goals of **CDC**
13. **Synchronizes all aspects of CDC's pandemic preparedness and response** from strategy through implementation and evaluation
14. **Implements, coordinates, and evaluates programs across NCIRD and CDC** to optimize public health impact

## NCIRD Priorities for 2024-2025

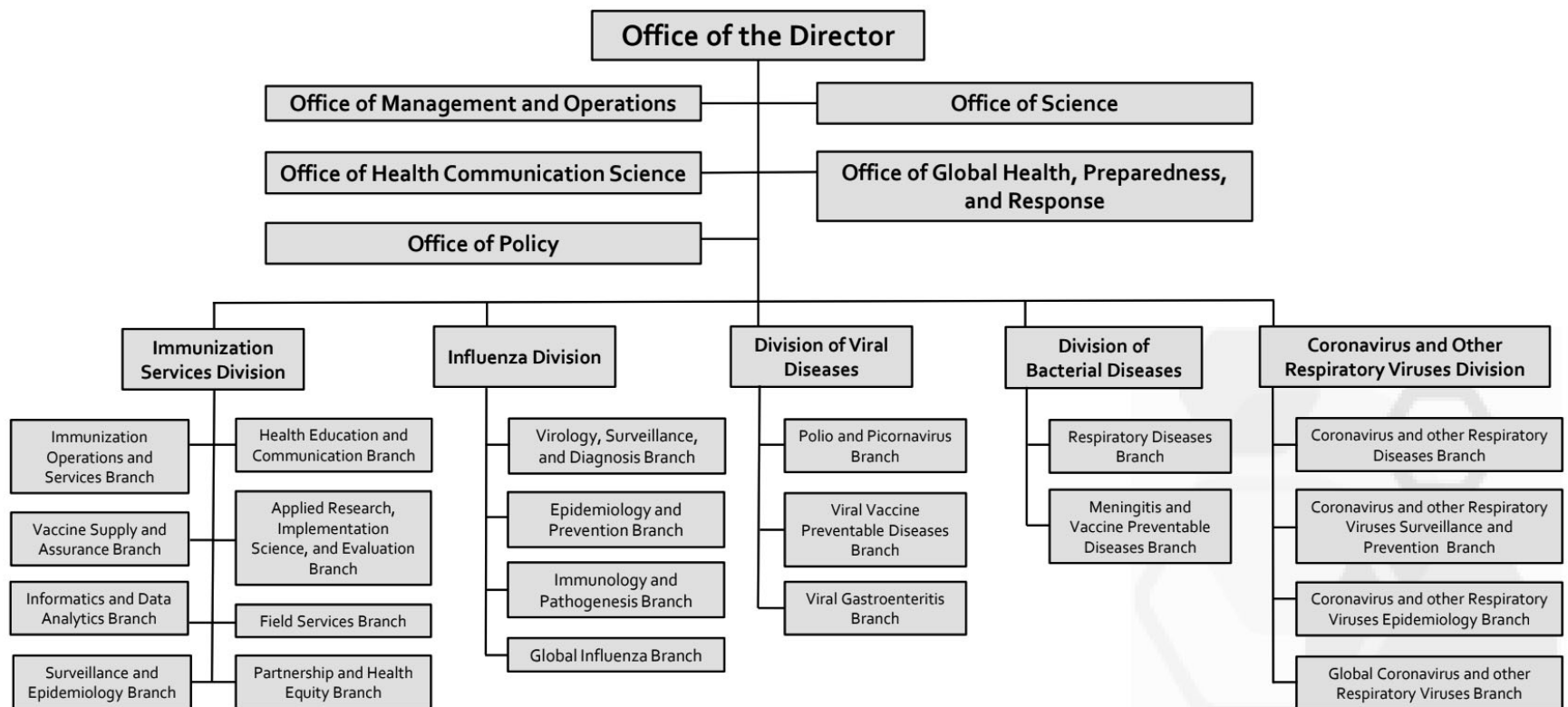
1. **[Improve organizational health** through modernization of our structure and operations through the "NCIRD Thrives" Initiative.] *Internal priority*
2. **Establish a respiratory season readiness structure** to facilitate coordination across NCIRD and the agency to ensure CDC is prepared for future respiratory seasons.
3. **Establish equitable access to vaccines** in the United States across the lifespan of people, with a special focus on catch-up vaccination for adults and children and improvement of data and methods for identifying populations and communities at risk for vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks.

## **NCIRD Priorities for 2024-2025 (cont'd)**

- 4. Improve platforms for evaluation of maternal vaccines**, including their outcomes.
  - 5. Act as a diagnostics accelerator**, including through strong partnerships with FDA Radx, ICAP, BARDA, commercial labs, etc.
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# National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD) Organizational Structure



# Major Programs

## ■ Immunization Gateway

- Helps Tribes/TECs/THOs build or improve data infrastructure where NCIRD implemented and supports the Immunization (IZ) Gateway to facilitate efficient data exchange between multi-jurisdictional vaccination providers (e.g federal agencies) and jurisdictional Immunization Information Systems (IIS)
- NCIRD has contracts in place to provide technical assistance for IHS to onboard to the IZ Gateway, facilitate the testing of data exchange with IIS, and move bidirectional data exchange between jurisdictional IIS and IHS-affiliated clinics

## ■ Vaccines for Children

- Eligible children receive all immunizations recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) at no cost
- All AI/AN children (those under the age of 19) are eligible

# **Avenues for Engagement with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)**

Melinda Wharton

# What is the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)?

- The ACIP is a federal advisory committee that provides advice and guidance to the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on most effective means to prevent vaccine-preventable diseases in the United States
  - Vaccines and related agents (e.g., antisera, immune globulins, antiviral agents)
  - FDA-licensed vaccines (and unlicensed vaccines if warranted)

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/committee/charter.html>

## What is the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)? (cont'd)

- For each product, the committee advises on population groups and/or circumstances in which a vaccine or related agent is recommended
- Committee deliberations on use of vaccines to control disease in the U.S. shall include consideration of disease epidemiology and burden of disease, vaccine efficacy and effectiveness, vaccine safety, the quality of evidence reviewed, economic analyses and implementation issues

## ACIP Meetings

- Generally, three 2-day meetings annually: February, June, and October
  - Recent meetings have been 3-days
  - Frequent additional meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Meetings must be open to the public with time for public comment
  - Oral public comment time is provided prior to scheduled votes
  - Increased public interest in providing oral public comment over last several years
  - Members of the public can submit written public comment via [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov)
- Meeting information may be found at [cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/index.html)

# ACIP Voting Members

- Up to 20 voting members
  - Includes one consumer representative
  - Up to 19 members with expertise in specific disciplines
- 4-year, overlapping terms
- Members screened for conflicts of interest upon appointment, annually through term, and at every ACIP meeting
- ACIP is independent of CDC; voting members are not CDC employees



## *Ex-Officio* Members

- Six *ex-officio* members represent other government offices and agencies involved in immunization
  - Members may serve on work groups
  - Members attend and participate in every ACIP meeting





# Liaison Organizations

- Thirty organizations with broad involvement in immunization
- Designated representative brings perspective of the organization
  - Keeps organization and membership apprised of ACIP deliberations and recommendations
- Members serve on work groups, attend and participate in every ACIP meeting
- Certain organizations assist with development, publication of immunization schedules “harmonized” with ACIP



## ACIP Work Groups

- Subcommittees that augment the effectiveness of ACIP through in-depth review of specific topics to facilitate informed and efficient decision-making
  - Work Group responsible for collection, analysis, and preparation of information for presentation, discussion, deliberation, and vote by ACIP
  - Direction, focus, and pace of Work Groups guided by CDC and HHS priorities
  - Work Groups do not make recommendations to CDC
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## Recent Developments Related to AI/AN Recommendations

- In August 2023, ACIP recommended nirsevimab, a long-acting antibody product, for prevention of severe respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) for all infants during their first RSV season and for those 8-19 months of age who are at increased risk of severe RSV during their second RSV season
  - American Indian or Alaska Native children are among those for whom nirsevimab is recommended for the second RSV season
  - Tribal engagement occurred very late in the process
- In ACIP will soon consider the following policy question: **Should Vaxelis be included with PedvaxHIB in the preferential recommendation for American Indian and Alaska Native infants?**

## January 2024 CDC/ATSDR Listening Session on possible use of Vaxelis among AI/AN infants

- NCIRD, in partnership with OTASA, organized an open tribal listening session on 1/9/2024 facilitated by Second Chief Del Beaver
- Eighty individuals attended the session, and of these, ~55 participants represented tribes, tribal-serving organizations, or Indian Health Service (IHS)
- Participants actively engaged and asked key questions about the upcoming potential policy change; this discussion will be incorporated into presentations at upcoming public ACIP meetings

**We welcome your feedback:** How do you recommend that we enhance information sharing with and participation by tribes in the policy formulation process?

# Thank you!

For more information, contact CDC  
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)  
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

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