

May 21, 2014

Honourable Hugh J. Flemming Q.C.
Minister of Health and Attorney General
Hugh.Flemming@gnb.ca

Re: Provincial immunization registry

Dear Honourable Hugh J. Flemming Q.C.,

The New Brunswick College of Family Physicians recommends that a provincial immunization registry be created. Immunization registries provide benefits for individuals, the community and the health care system. For example:¹

- Assurance that individuals get the right shots at the right time. This will reduce the number of times a vaccine is given as a precaution (when it is not known if it has been given already). This, in turn, will reduce immunization costs;
- Can generate reminders when vaccinations are due and provide proof of immunization for school or travel purposes;
- Public health professionals will use the data for program planning. With registries to help manage inventories, it may be possible to introduce universal programs for some of the newer vaccines that are beneficial, but costly;
- By keeping track of who is immunized, public health officials can identify populations at risk and target education, and early intervention;
- Some parents decline routine immunization for their children, and some people can't have vaccines due to allergies or other conditions. If there is an outbreak of infectious disease, immunization registries provide a way of advising such people that they or their children are at risk and should take extra precautions.

As primary care providers, we feel implementing an immunization registry is an important step in ensuring New Brunswickers' protection from the risk of vaccine-preventable illnesses. Registries are already in place in some regions of Canada. Also, the Canadian Immunization Registry Network (CIRN) has been working for a number of years in trying to put in place a national registry. One considerable challenge they face is the lack of development and adoption of immunisation registries in all provinces.² The implementation of a provincial registry would then bring the CIRN one step closer towards the implementation of a national registry, which would inevitably bring advantages to Canadians who move provinces.

We hope that you will consider this important request and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Marc André Doucet, MD, CCFP

cc: New Brunswick Pharmacists' Association
Victorian Order of Nurses
Mr Donald Arseneault, MLA, Health critic

¹ <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/med/regist-eng.php>

² <http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=20158>