



Aimed Alliance Comment
Re: Vaccines National Strategic Plan for the United States: 2026-2030

Vaccines National Strategic Plan Questions:

(1) Vaccine Plan Priorities

Based on advances or changes in policy, program, science, or practice, what components of the Vaccines National Strategic Plan do you think should be maintained and highlighted? What changes should be made to the Vaccines National Strategic Plan? This may include changes to the structure, goals, objectives, strategies, indicators, and/or priority populations. This may also include areas of the current Vaccines Plan that should be scaled back or areas of the current Plan that should be expanded or scaled up.

Aimed Alliance Response:

Aimed Alliance is a non-profit health policy organization that seeks to protect and enhance the rights of health care consumers and providers. We appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on the Vaccines National Strategic Plan in effort to prevent infectious disease and improve public health outcomes, particularly among minority and vulnerable populations. In updating the Strategic Plan, we urge the Department to ensure that it prioritizes:

- I. Reinforcing the importance of vaccination
- II. Basing vaccine policies on robust scientific evidence
- III. Combatting misinformation and expanding public health education

I. Reinforce the Importance of Vaccination

Vaccines are a cornerstone of public health, offering significant benefits not only to individuals but also to society as a whole through the establishment of herd immunity. However, vaccine hesitancy has emerged as an escalating public health challenge in the United States following the COVID-19 pandemic. Research shows that factors such as extensive media coverage, increased public attention on vaccination, and the spread of misinformation have amplified skepticism. Alarmingly, this hesitancy has extended to parents, potentially impacting childhood vaccination decisions. This growing trend highlights the need for sustained efforts in vaccine education and trust-building.

By improve educational outreach efforts and reinforcing the importance of collective protection provided by vaccines, we can improve vaccination rates. As a result, communities will see reduced disease transmission and increased protections for vulnerable populations, including immunocompromised individuals, children, and the elderly. Ensuring widespread vaccine coverage is essential to allow these at-risk populations to fully participate in society without fear of severe illness. Moreover, it will improve public health outcomes across all community members.

II. Base Vaccine Policies on Robust Scientific Evidence



Vaccine policies should be grounded in robust scientific evidence to promote public trust, efficacy, and ethical governance. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the critical role of evidence in health policy-making and highlighted the complexities of aligning scientific data with political, economic, and social considerations. Policies that are based in research not only improve public confidence but also foster informed decision-making. By prioritizing evidence-based approaches and communicating that policies are based on sound research can help maximize the benefits of vaccination, including reducing disease outbreaks, lowering healthcare costs, and protecting vulnerable populations.

III. Combat Misinformation and Expanding Public Health Education

During and following the COVID-19 pandemic, misinformation reduced confidence in vaccinations. To reinforce public education and confidence in vaccination and the benefits of herd immunity, public health education must ensure that it counters misinformation. Additionally, the Department should ensure that efforts to combat and expand public health education should be accessible by all individuals. Therefore, dissemination efforts should: (1) distribute health information in multiple formats, such as print, digital, social media; (2) provide materials in various languages; and (3) engage trusted community organizations.

IV. Conclusion

By prioritizing these approaches, public health efforts can better address health inequities, protect vulnerable populations, and ensure broader population protection against infectious diseases. We appreciate your consideration of these recommendations and remain committed to supporting efforts to enhance public health.

(2) Vaccine Plan Strategies and Objectives

Recognizing limited resources and the need to direct resources to settings and populations disproportionately impacted, which objectives and strategies of the Vaccines National Strategic Plan should be prioritized over those that may be less effective?

Aimed Alliance Response: To improve understanding of the community and individual benefits of vaccination, and subsequently improve vaccination rates, we urge the Department to invest in local community organizations to conduct public health outreach. Research shows that minority communities are more likely to trust information when it is delivered by non-governmental, community-based entities. These community messengers, such as local nonprofits, religious leaders, and grassroots organizations, are instrumental in effectively disseminating health information. Allocating resources to these local community-trusted organizations will promote culturally competent communications that are more likely to build trust and drive better health outcomes, especially in communities that are hit the hardest by infectious disease.

(3) Lessons Learned from COVID-19

Leveraging lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic, what new or existing goals, objectives, or strategies should be prioritized in the next iteration of the National Vaccine Strategic Plan to increase United States preparedness and response to future pandemics? Please provide data and justification.



Aimed Alliance Response: We strongly recommend developing and maintaining clear, actionable guidance on vaccines and risk management strategies for emerging diseases. During the COVID-19 pandemic, initial guidance helped mitigate risks for at-risk individuals. However, as vaccines became available, updates to these guidelines diminished, leaving high-risk populations uncertain about the types of additional precautions they could take. We recommend that future public health responses include updated recommendations for mitigating risks even with vaccination. Additionally, in developing future guidance, we urge the Department to consider public input from disability advocates to ensure it addresses the unique needs of high-risk individuals.