



A10508-A/S8182-A (Paulin/Hoylman)

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to authorizing licensed pharmacists to administer an approved vaccine for COVID-19; and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof

The New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO), on behalf of all 58 Local Departments of Health, supports A.10508-A/S8182-A, which authorize licensed pharmacists to administer approved vaccines for COVID-19, should a vaccine be approved and available.

NYSACHO is committed to improving and preventing disease; and increasing adult immunization rates is an evidence-based public health intervention. Given the ongoing outbreaks of communicable diseases, it is imperative we utilize and expand the responsibilities of the professional health workforce in New York State.

New York State first enacted legislation authorizing pharmacists to administer certain vaccines to adults in 2008. In 2009, the first year of the law's implementation, New York State responded to the global H1N1 Influenza pandemic. Pharmacists were critical partners in getting this vaccine to the vulnerable adult population. In the most recent year reported, pharmacists administered close to two million vaccines. They play an integral role in expanding access to life-saving vaccines for adults, and in recent severe influenza outbreaks, to children. They will be vital and necessary to mounting a mass vaccination effort should a COVID-19 vaccine be approved.

While S.8182-A (Hoylman) / A.10508-A (Paulin) is an important tool in the fight against COVID-19, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for public health statutes that provide the necessary discretion and flexibility to respond to public health emergencies. This is particularly important during disease outbreaks, where cases and fatalities can rise quickly if swift public health countermeasures are not taken. NYSACHO supports proposed language put forth by the State Business Council of New York State to be considered as a Chapter Amendment to allow pharmacists to administer all CDC-adult recommended vaccines.

Their proposal states that “In all instances in the bill where the specific listing of allowed vaccines is present... add:

“or, for patients eighteen years of age or older, any other immunizations recommended by the advisory committee on immunizations practices of the centers for disease control and prevention”

NYSACHO appreciates the continued efforts of the Legislature and Governor in safeguarding the public's health, and for the reasons stated above, we strongly support this bill and recommend that, with the addition of the proposed Chapter amendment, it be enacted into law.

Contact: Sarah Ravenhall, Executive Director, sarah@nysacho.org