



Women In Government Position Statement on HPV Vaccines

Women In Government has made cervical cancer elimination one of our organization's top priorities. Recent advances in medical experts' understanding of cervical cancer and the human papillomavirus (HPV), the virus that causes it, and the availability of new preventive technologies make its elimination possible. Thus, we believe that the availability of a vaccine for HPV will be a critical step towards achieving this goal.

Currently, there are two HPV vaccines in development, one of which has been submitted to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for approval, with a decision expected later this year. Clinical research has shown the two vaccines to be both safe and efficacious in preventing infection with the two types of HPV that account for approximately 70 percent of all cervical cancers.

If the FDA approves an HPV vaccine, then the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) will decide whether and how it would be incorporated into vaccination programs and who should receive it. Women In Government is hopeful that the ACIP's decision would ensure that this life-saving technology is available to all for whom it is indicated – regardless of socioeconomic status.

Women In Government believes that an FDA-approved HPV vaccine would be part of a comprehensive strategy to eliminate cervical cancer. It is important that this strategy also include screening for cervical cancer, using advanced and appropriate technologies, to target those HPV types that are not covered by the current HPV vaccines and to reach women who have already been exposed to the virus.