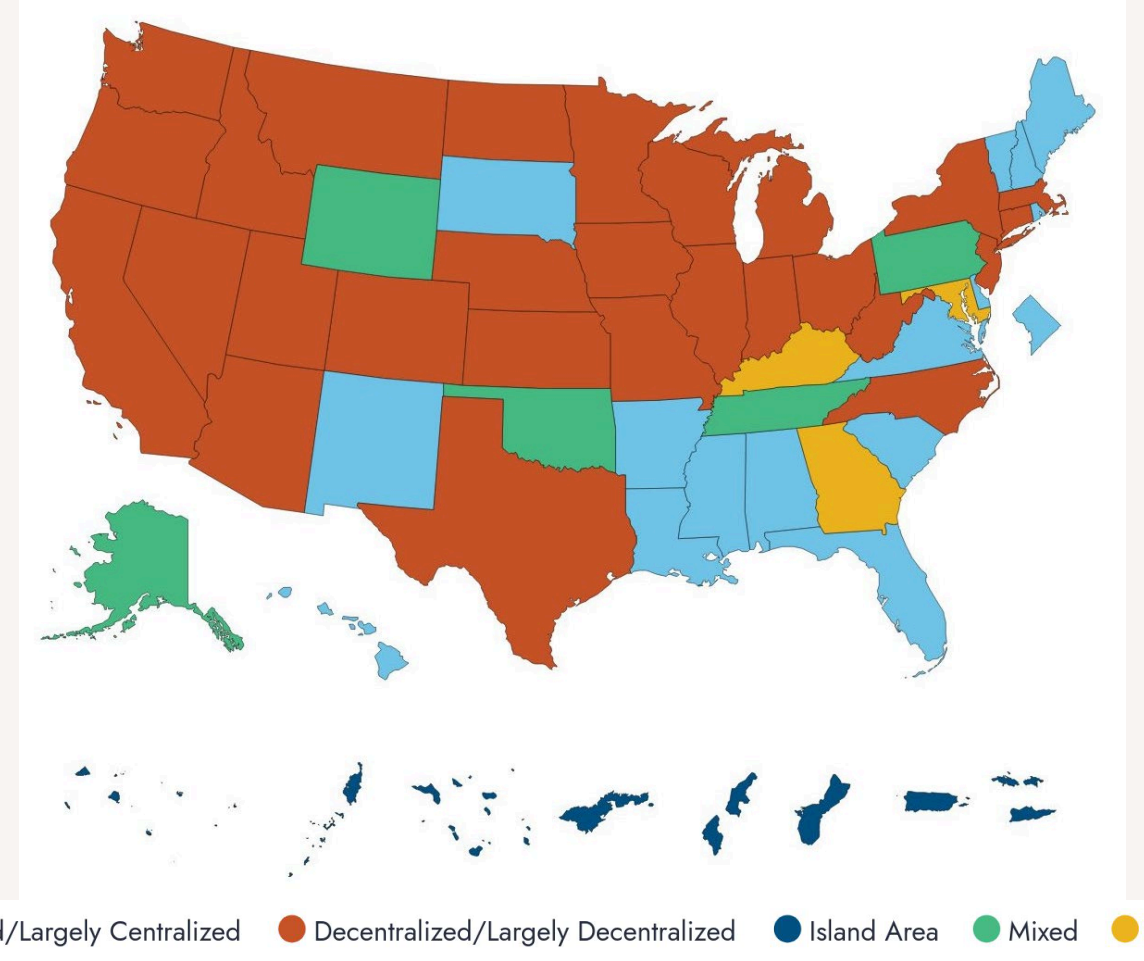
Pennsylvania
Department of Health

OCTOBER 23, 2026

Current Public Health Landscape: Challenges and Response

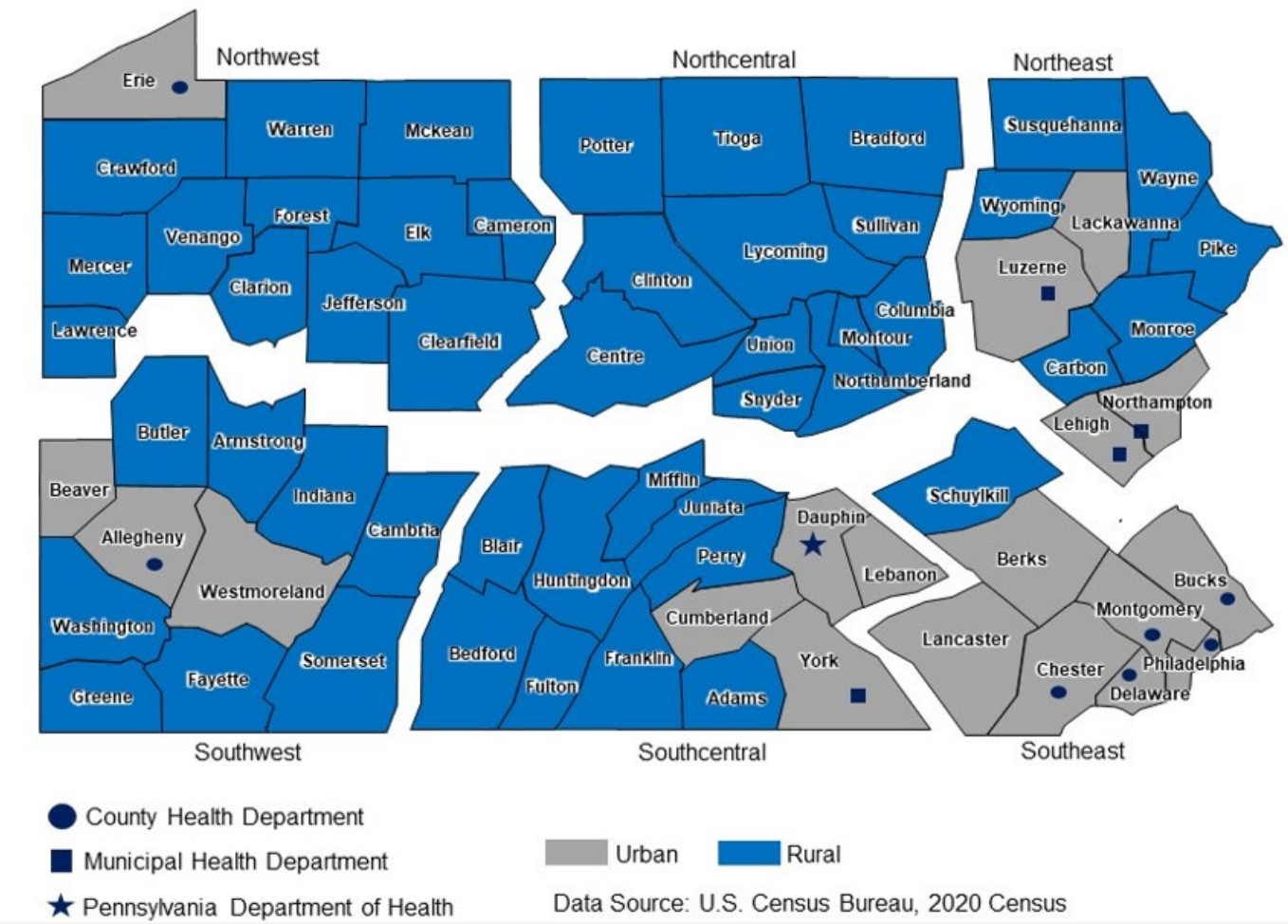
Debra L. Bogen, MD, FAAP
Secretary of Health

Diverse range of public health governance structures across U.S.



Source: ASTHO

Pennsylvania's Public Health Structure



Local Health Departments

County

1. Allegheny
2. Bucks
3. Chester
4. Delaware
5. Erie
6. Montgomery
7. Philadelphia

City

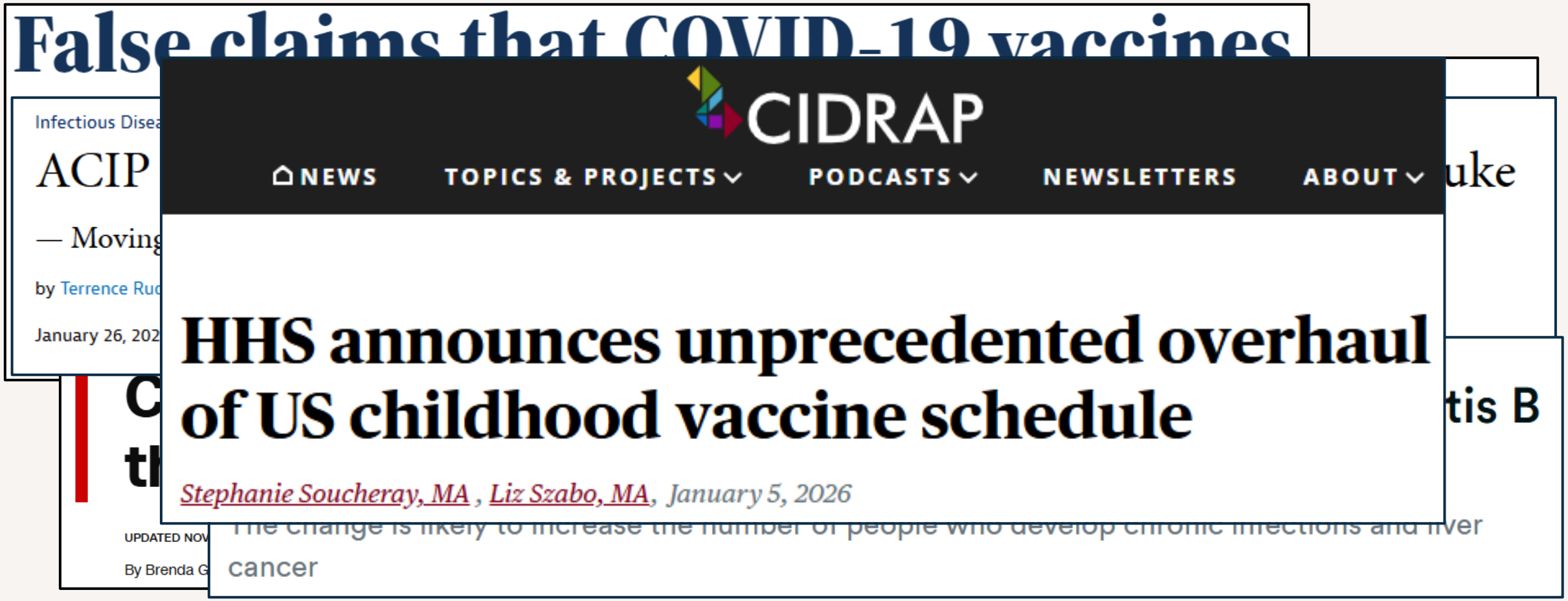
1. Allentown
2. Bethlehem
3. Wilkes-Barre
4. York City

Highlights of PA DOH Work

Public Health Action	Examples
Prevent epidemics and spread of disease	Salmonella, measles, syphilis, etc…
Collect and analyze data to inform action	Immunizations, maternal morbidity/mortality, vital records, OD
Prevent injuries and promote healthy behaviors	Good Food Healthy Hospitals, Walk Works
Protect against environmental hazards	Lead, PFAS
Respond to disasters and assist in recovery	Train derailment, nursing home loss of heat
Assure quality and accessibility of health services	Survey hospitals, long term care facilities, EMS, others
Oversee vital records	Issue birth and death records

Vaccinations and Measles Response

Recent news headlines



Key federal vaccine policy changes in 2025

Summer 2025:
replaced ACIP members, most workgroups ceased, liaison orgs removed

Sept 2025:
downgraded COVID vax recommendation to shared decision making

Dec 2025:
downgraded hep B vax recommendation for newborns to shared decision making

Key federal vaccine policy changes in 2026

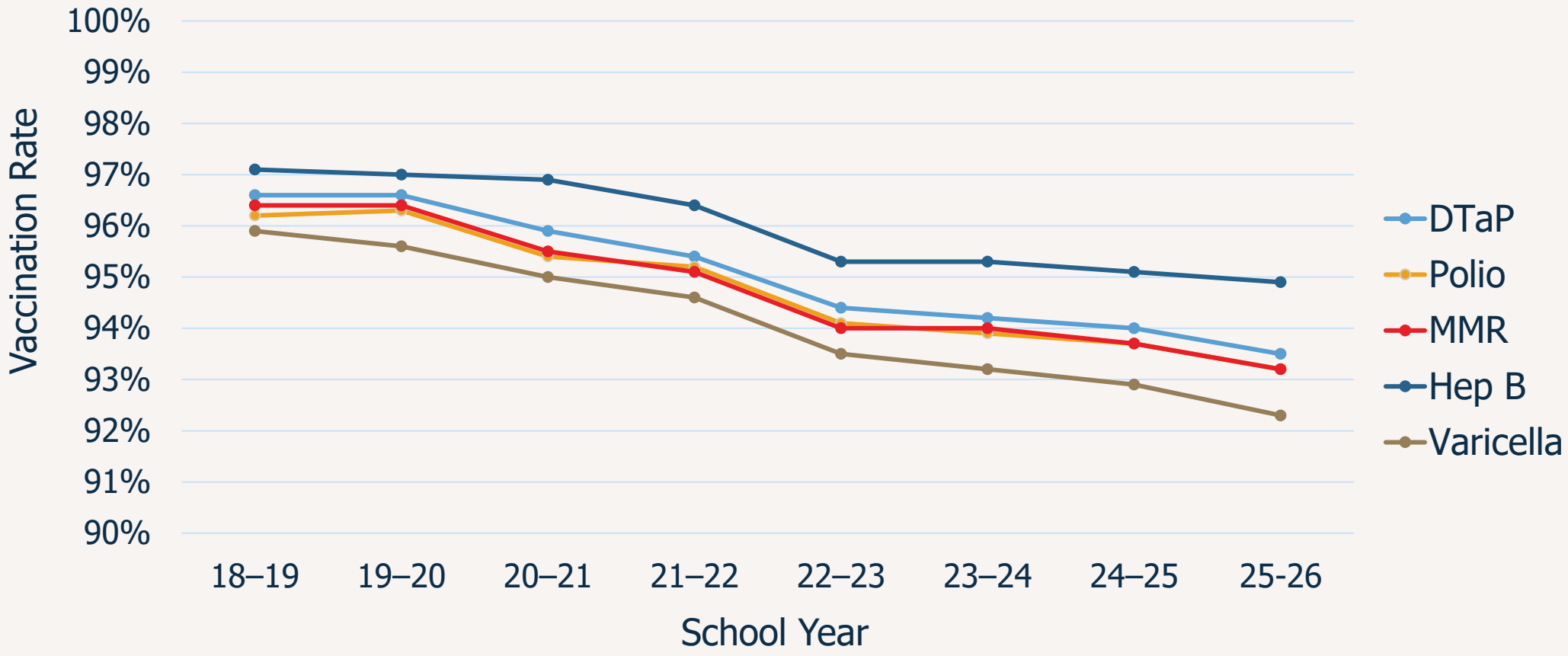
Jan 2026: updated childhood vax schedule, reduced diseases for which CDC recommends vax as default from 17 to 11

Apr 2026: federal judge issues temporary injunction in *AAP v. Kennedy*; now appealed to First Circuit

May 2026: Amended ACIP charter; EO for CDC & ACIP to align childhood vax schedule to "peer" nations

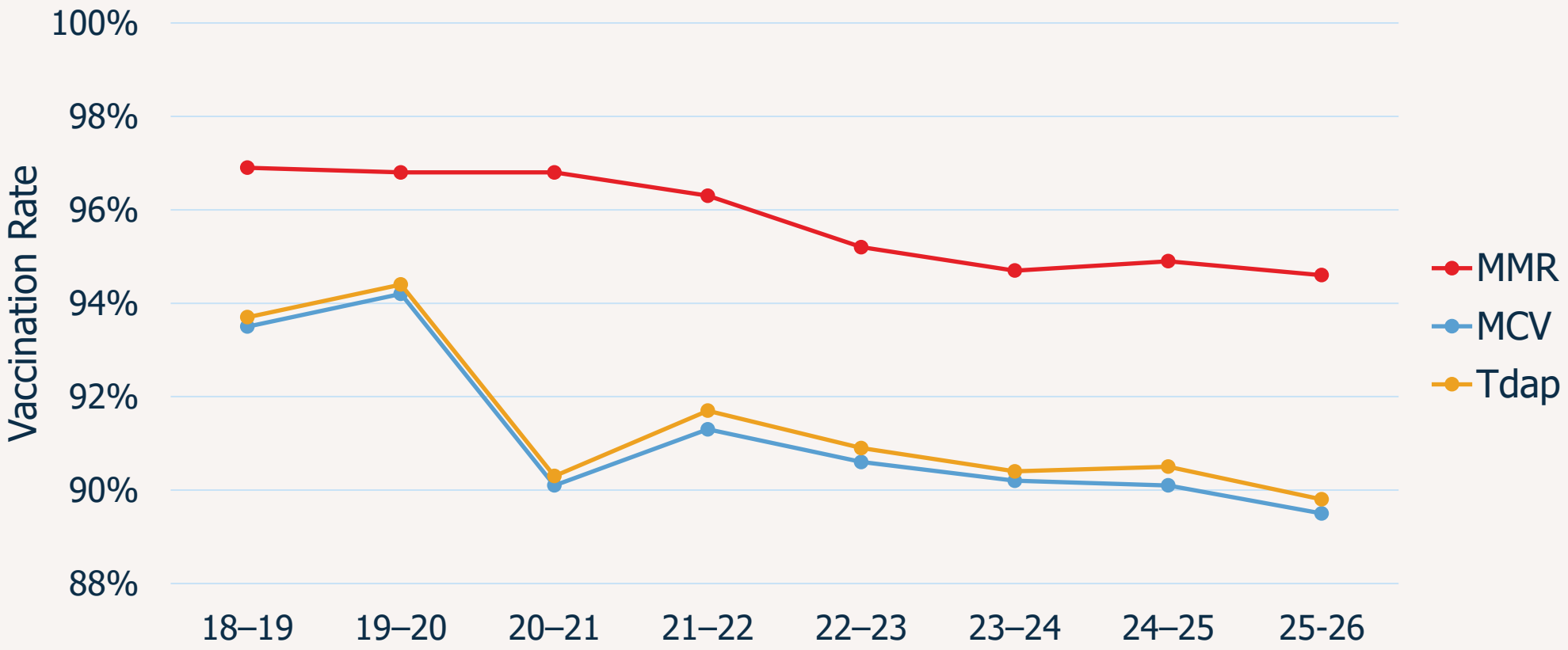
Aug 2026: EO to again align childhood vax schedule to peer nations, separate MMR to M+M+R, space all vaccines

Vaccination rates for kindergarten slowly declining in PA, 2018-2026



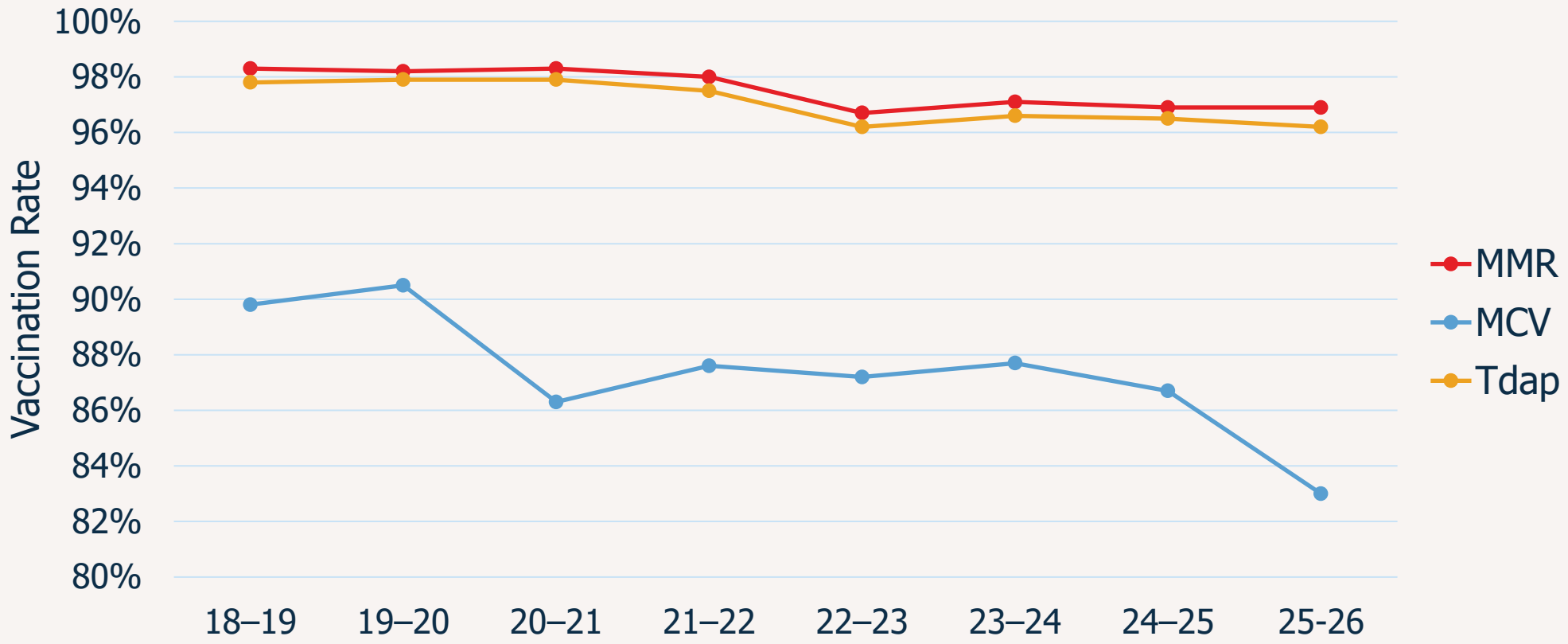
Source: DOH School Immunization Rates

Vaccination rates for 7th grade slowly declining in PA, 2018-2026



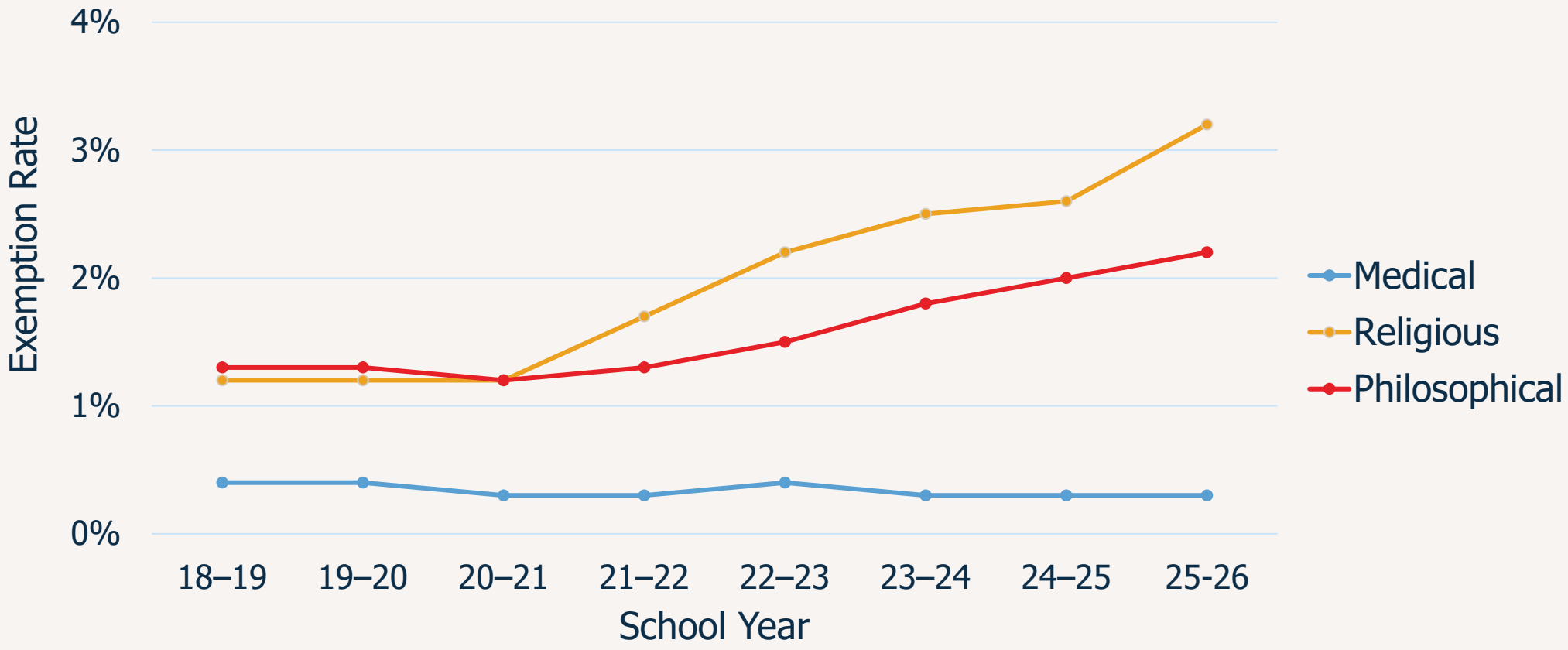
Source: DOH School Immunization Rates

Vaccination rates for 12th grade slowly declining in PA, 2018-2026



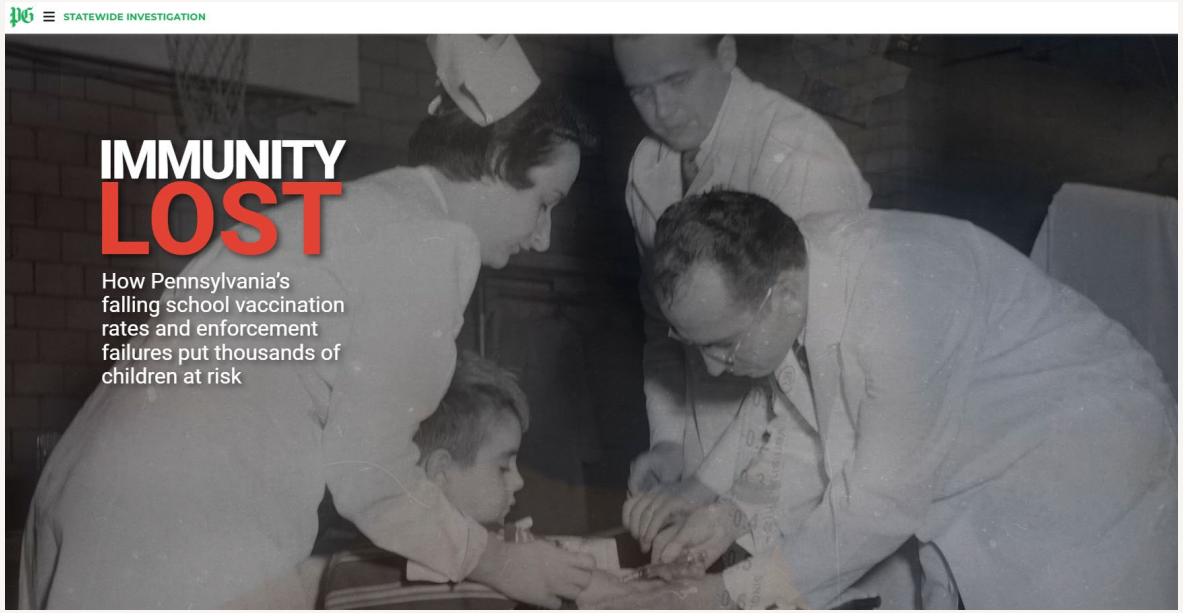
Source: DOH School Immunization Rates

Religious and philosophical exemptions for vaccines increasing in PA, 2018-2026



Source: DOH School Immunization Rates

Post Gazette and Inquirer published feature articles on declining school vaccination rates



The Philadelphia Inquirer

More than 200 Philly-area schools vulnerable to measles outbreak

1,000-plus unvaccinated kindergartners raise risk

Source: Pittsburgh Post Gazette, Philadelphia Inquirer

Many organizations working to fill vaccine information and infrastructure gaps

Northeast Public Health Collaborative

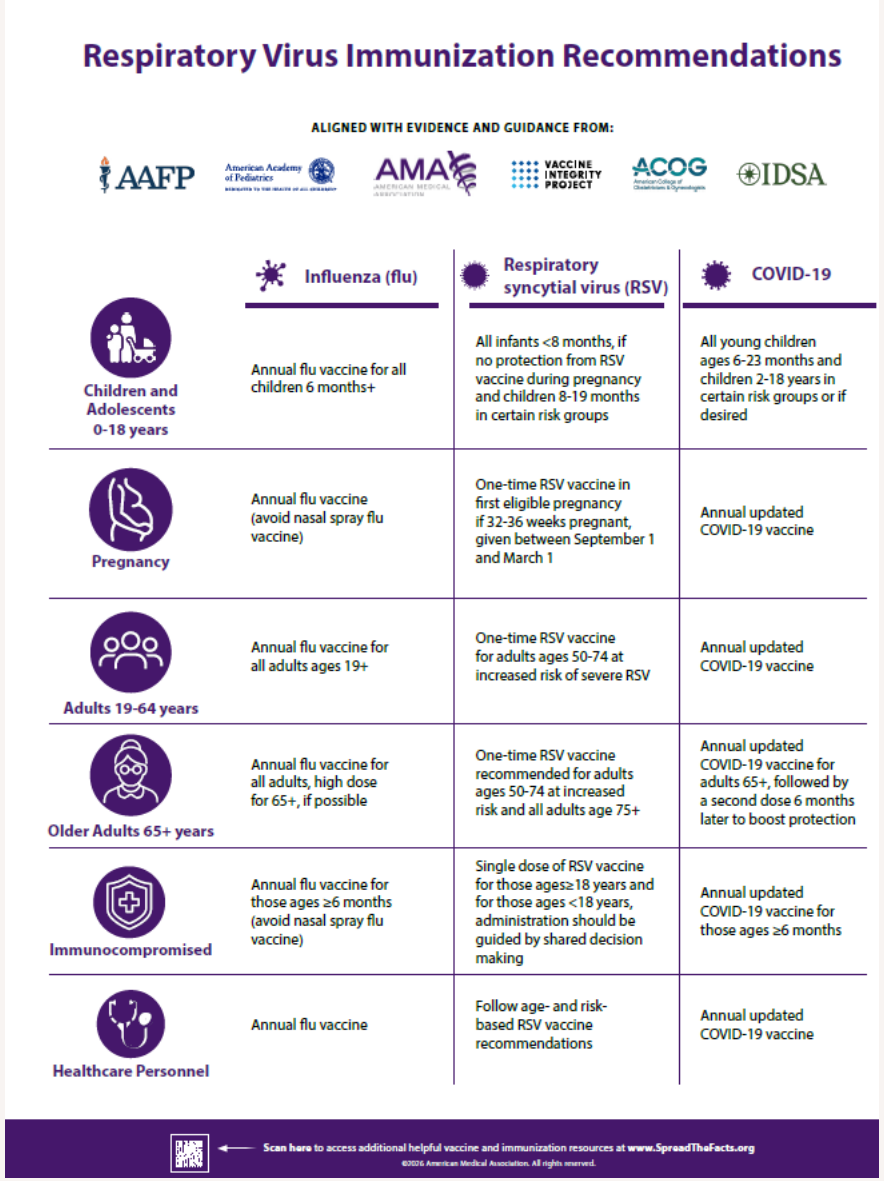
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Vaccine Education Center

Your Local Epidemiologist

University of Minnesota Vaccine Integrity Project

Common Health Coalition

Trusted Messenger Program



Respiratory Virus Immunization Recommendations

ALIGNED WITH EVIDENCE AND GUIDANCE FROM:

AAFP · American Academy of Pediatrics · AMA · Vaccine Integrity Project · ACOG · IDSA

	Influenza (flu)	Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)	COVID-19
Children and Adolescents 0-18 years	Annual flu vaccine for all children 6 months+	All infants <8 months, if no protection from RSV vaccine during pregnancy and children 8-19 months in certain risk groups	All young children ages 6-23 months and children 2-18 years in certain risk groups or if desired
Pregnancy	Annual flu vaccine (avoid nasal spray flu vaccine)	One-time RSV vaccine in first eligible pregnancy if 32-36 weeks pregnant, given between September 1 and March 1	Annual updated COVID-19 vaccine
Adults 19-64 years	Annual flu vaccine for all adults ages 19+	One-time RSV vaccine for adults ages 50-74 at increased risk of severe RSV	Annual updated COVID-19 vaccine
Older Adults 65+ years	Annual flu vaccine for all adults, high dose for 65+, if possible	One-time RSV vaccine recommended for adults ages 50-74 at increased risk and all adults age 75+	Annual updated COVID-19 vaccine for adults 65+, followed by a second dose 6 months later to boost protection
Immunocompromised	Annual flu vaccine for those ages ≥6 months (avoid nasal spray flu vaccine)	Single dose of RSV vaccine for those ages≥18 years and for those ages <18 years, administration should be guided by shared decision making	Annual updated COVID-19 vaccine for those ages ≥6 months
Healthcare Personnel	Annual flu vaccine	Follow age- and risk-based RSV vaccine recommendations	Annual updated COVID-19 vaccine

Scan here to access additional helpful vaccine and immunization resources at www.SpreadTheFacts.org

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Note: click each image to learn more about that organization

RESPONSE

Oct. 2025: Gov. Shapiro signed Executive Order protecting vaccine access

- DOH: create VFC-like program (PA CARES), create vaccine info website, convene vaccine education workgroup
- All agencies ensure regulations and guidance consistent with recommendations from leading medical associations
- DHS & PID: ensure vaccine coverage without cost-sharing in Medicaid and private insurance
- Depts. State, Aging, and Education: communicate updated guidance to partners

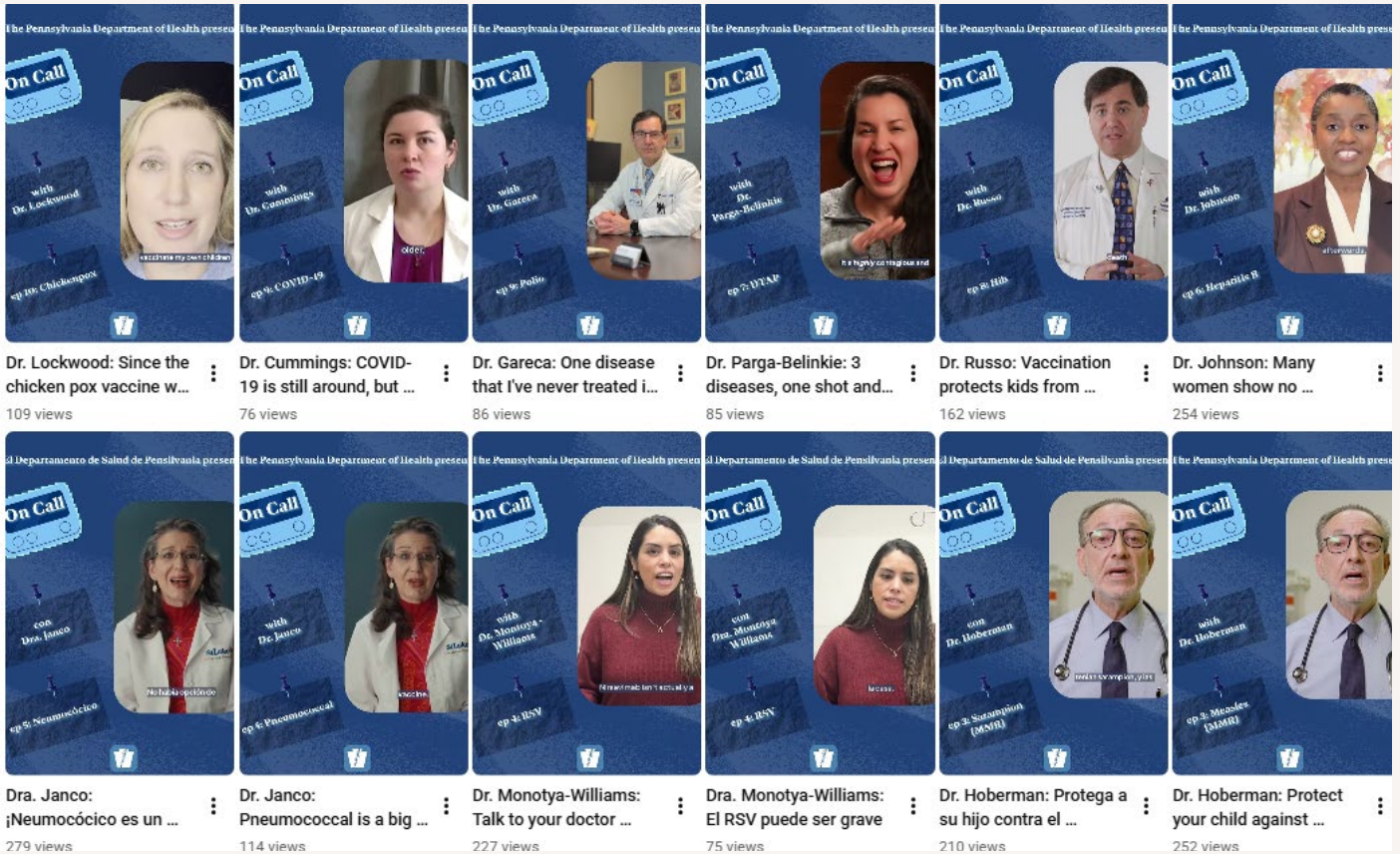


Source: Executive Order 2025-02

RESPONSE

Providing information to the public about vaccines





YouTube Playlist - "On Call: Immunizations"

RESPONSE

DOH 2025-2026 school vaccination rates interactive tool now live

Data by school and grade

Search schools: Marian Anderson

Show 100 entries

Download CSV

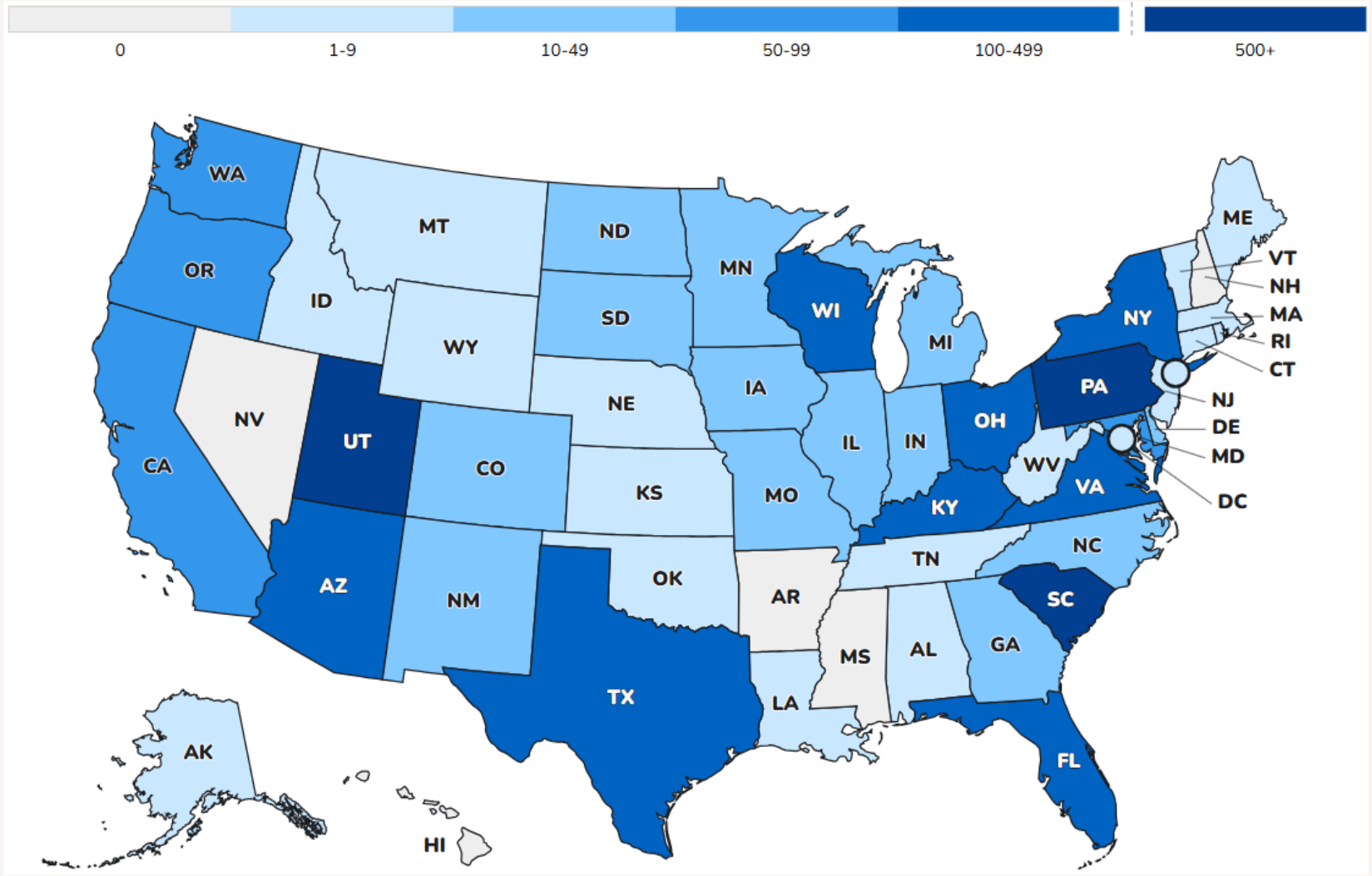
County	School	Grade	Total Students Enrolled	DTaP Percent	Polio Percent	MMR Percent
filter...	filter...	filter...	filter...	filter...	filter...	filter...
Philadelphia	Marian Anderson Neighborhood Academy	Kindergarten	45	97.8%	97.8%	97.8%

RESPONSE

Changes to CDC VFC and 317 funding policies led to effort to increase enrolled hospitals

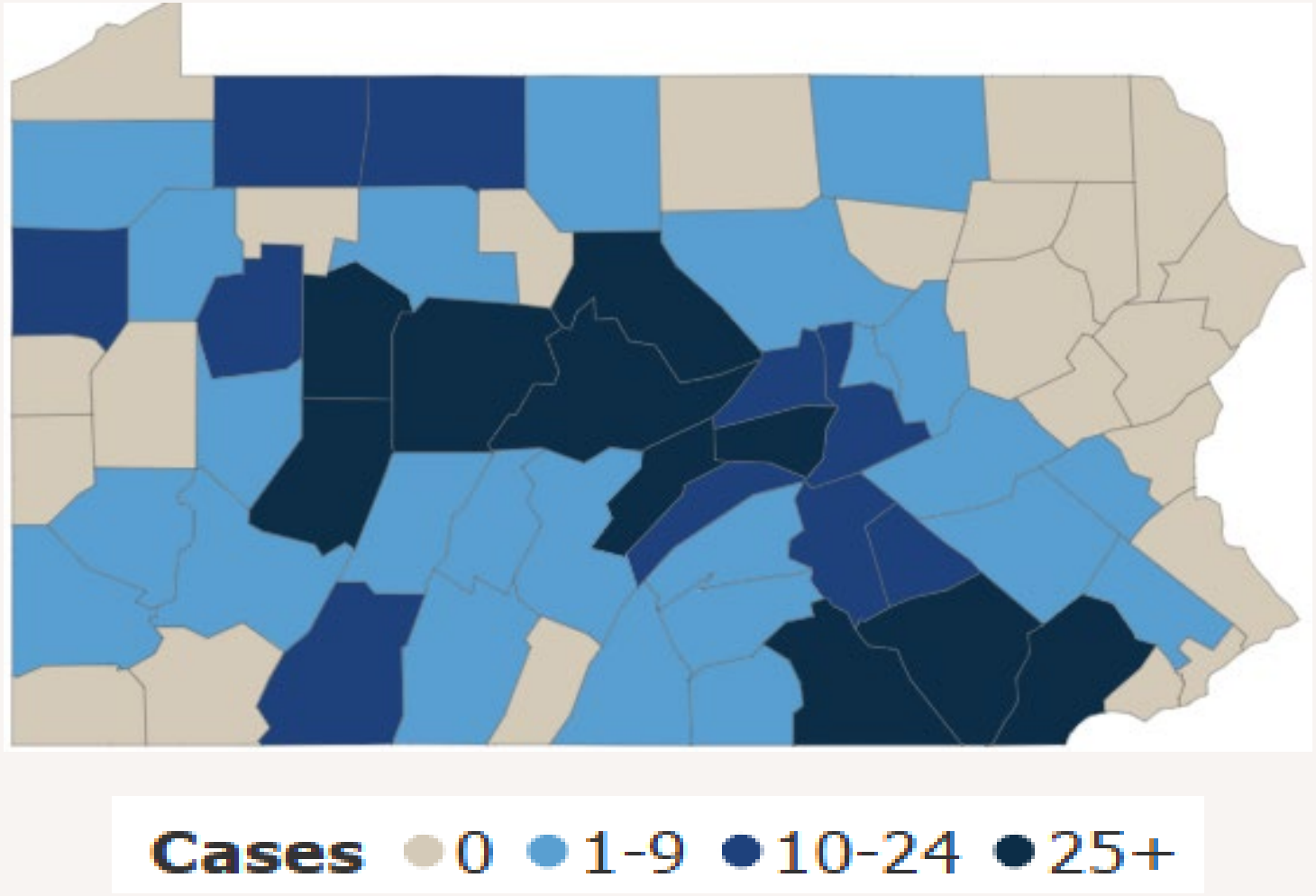
- Since 2025, CDC no longer permits 317 funds for universal administration of Hep B birth dose
  - VFC eligible infants receive VFC vax; others through their insurance
- Also requires states enroll at least 30% of birthing hospitals in VFC
  - PA DOH enrolled 78%
  - VFC birthing facilities must offer birth dose Hep B and RSV monoclonal Ab product

In 2026, 4,410 measles cases in U.S.



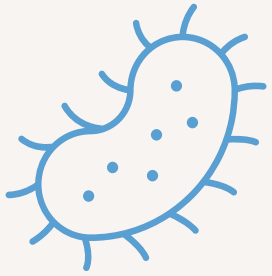
As of 10/15/26 - Source: CDC, Measles Cases and Outbreaks

PA: 1,317 measles cases in 2026 (44 counties)



As of 10/21/26 - Source: DOH Measles Dashboard

Monitoring and responding to new cases



Disease tracking

- Case reports from labs and clinicians
- Testing at DOH State Lab and commercial labs
- Wastewater surveillance
- Clinical consult team



Case investigation and contact tracing

- Identify exposures
- Education
- Access to testing and care
- Isolation and quarantine

DOH State Health Centers

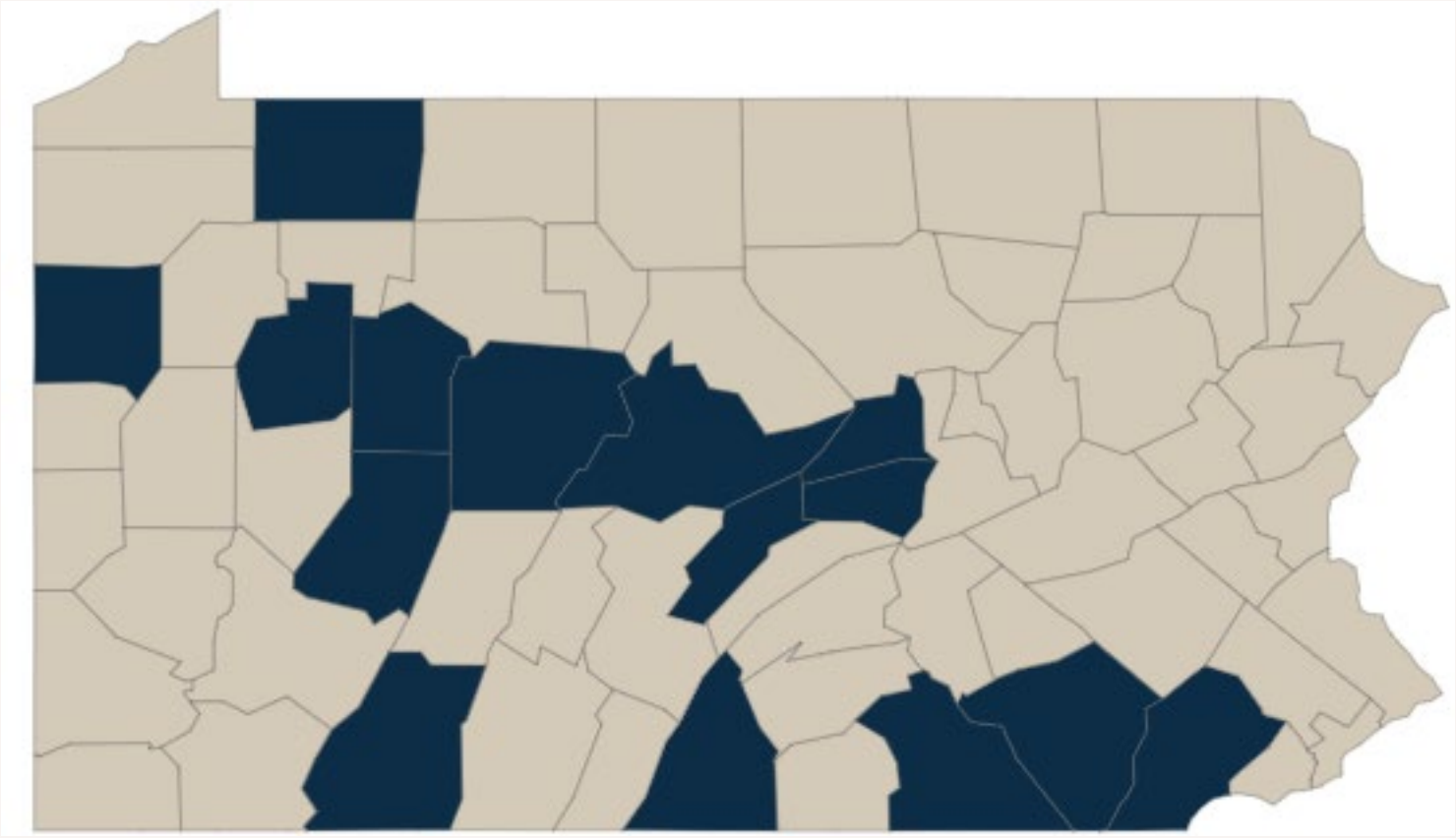
RESPONSE

Raising awareness and educating about the outbreak

- Published outbreak dashboard and resources at pa.gov/measles
- Issued Health Alerts (HANs) about the outbreak, early MMR vaccination, PEP
- Educated clinical and public health professionals through virtual Measles Grand Rounds, HANs, and other engagements
- Partnering with PDE and DHS to prepare school nurses, administrators, and childcare facilities on response

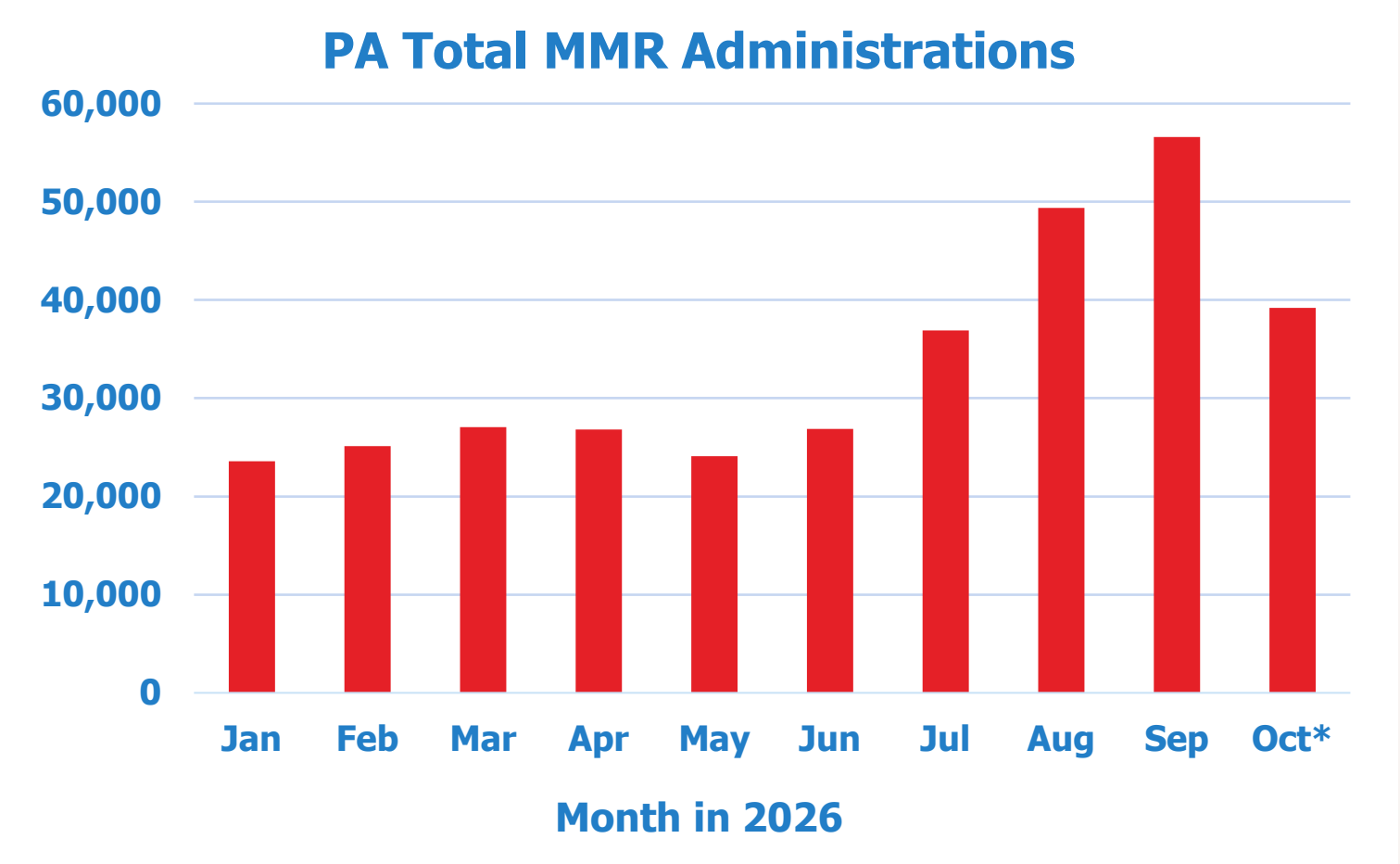
RESPONSE

15 counties in PA with community measles transmission



Source: DOH Measles Dashboard

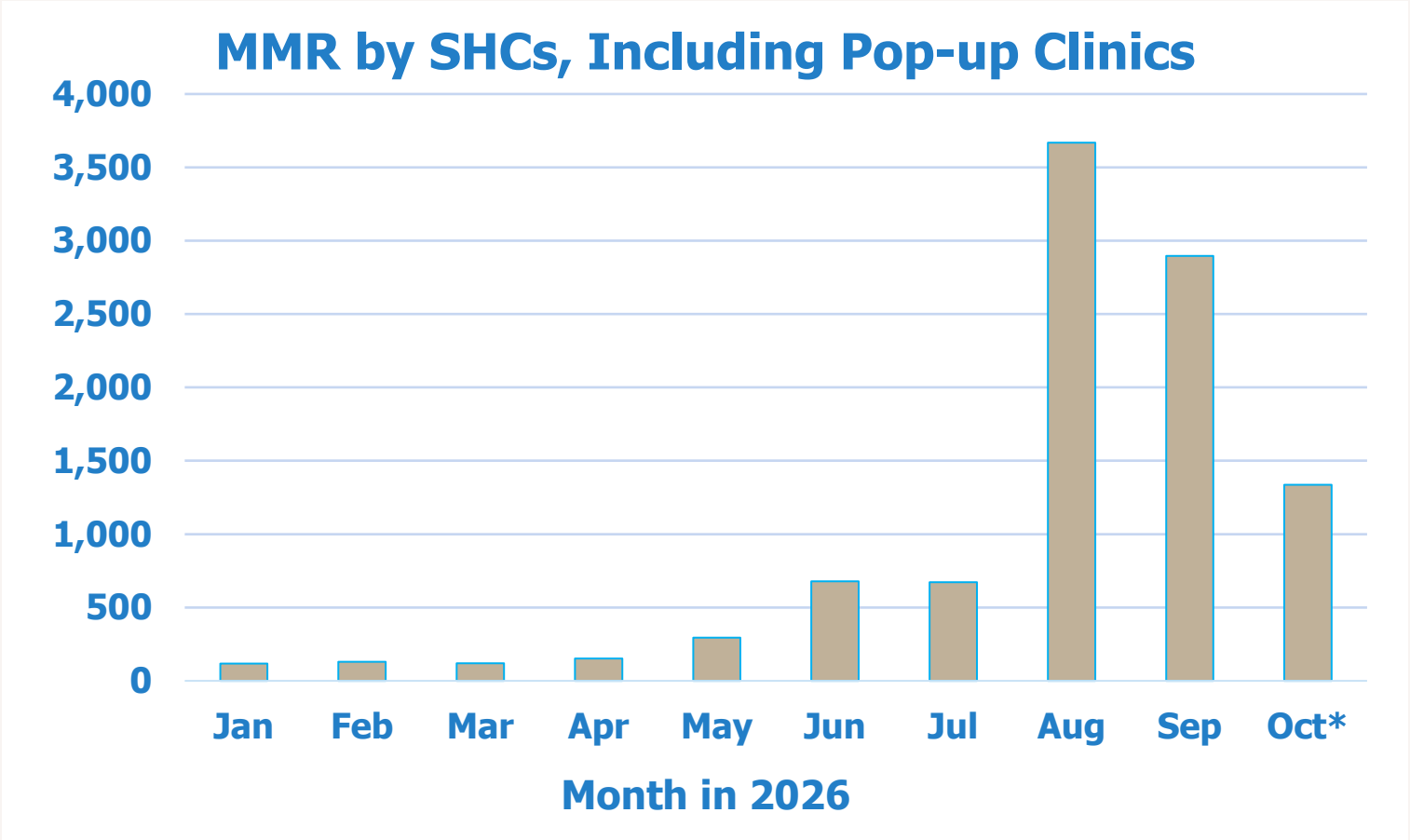
Total MMR doses sharply increased since start of outbreak in 2026



*Through Oct 20, 2026

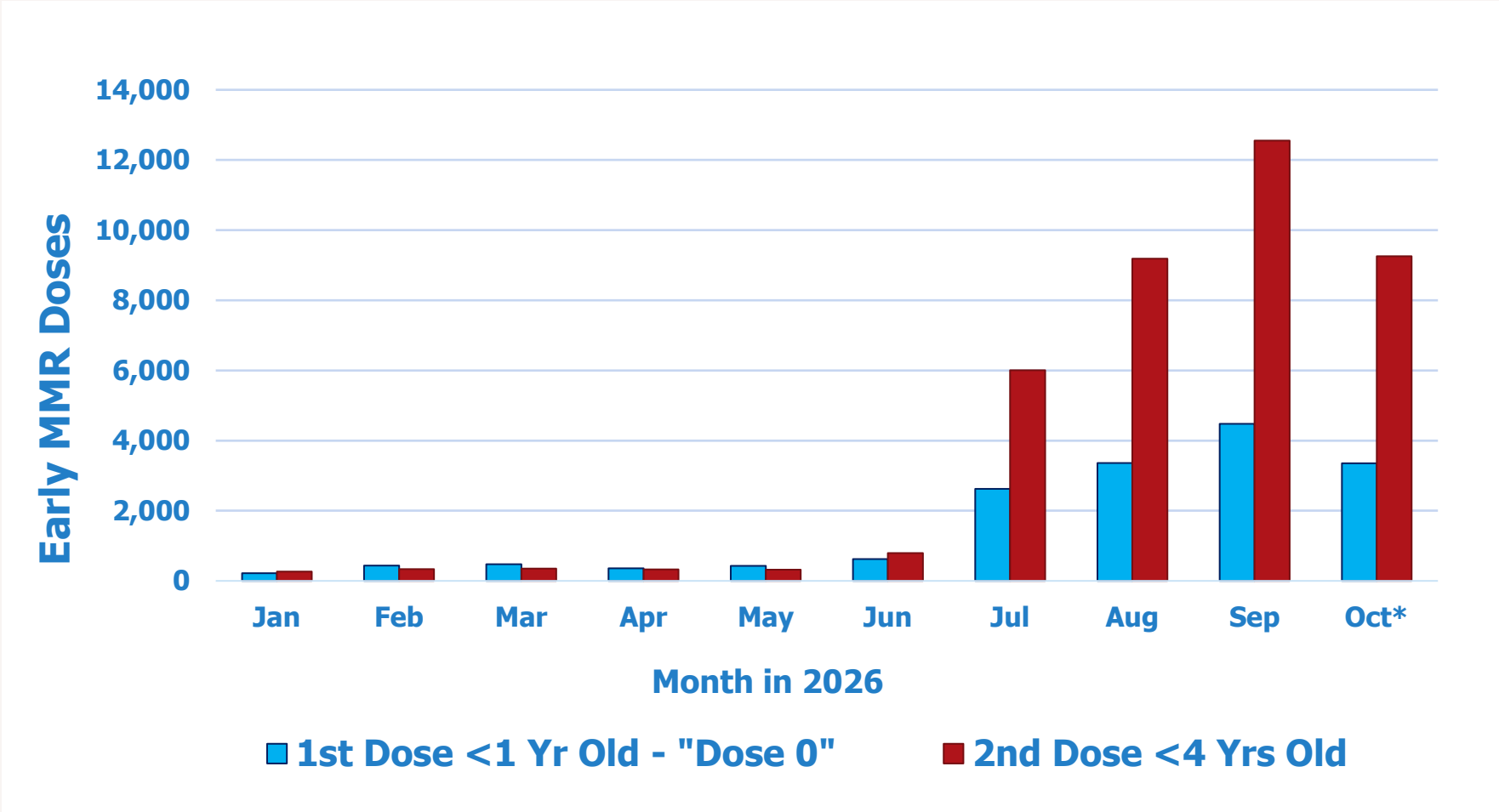
Vaccination – Pop Up Clinics

- Targeted approach
- Small set up
- Variety of settings
- >210 clinics across to date



*Through Oct 20, 2026

"Dose Zero" and early MMR doses increased dramatically in 2026 after DOH health alert



Can’t do this work without many partners

- Health care providers, especially in areas with highest cases
- Local health departments and other states when cases cross jurisdictional boundaries (e.g., soccer camp exposure)
- CDC measles team
- Schools and childcare with PDE/DHS



Health care providers can contribute to policy in many ways

- Consider which level you're interested in
- Participate in state and national medical societies (e.g., PAMED, PA AAP, PAFP, etc…)
- Work with local organizations
- Share your perspectives (e.g., elected representatives, op-ed's, public comment for meetings and regulations)
- Sign up to receive the PA Bulletin & HANs
  - http://pahan.health.pa.gov

Pennsylvania
Department of Health

Thank you



Follow the PA Department of Health on:
Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, and YouTube

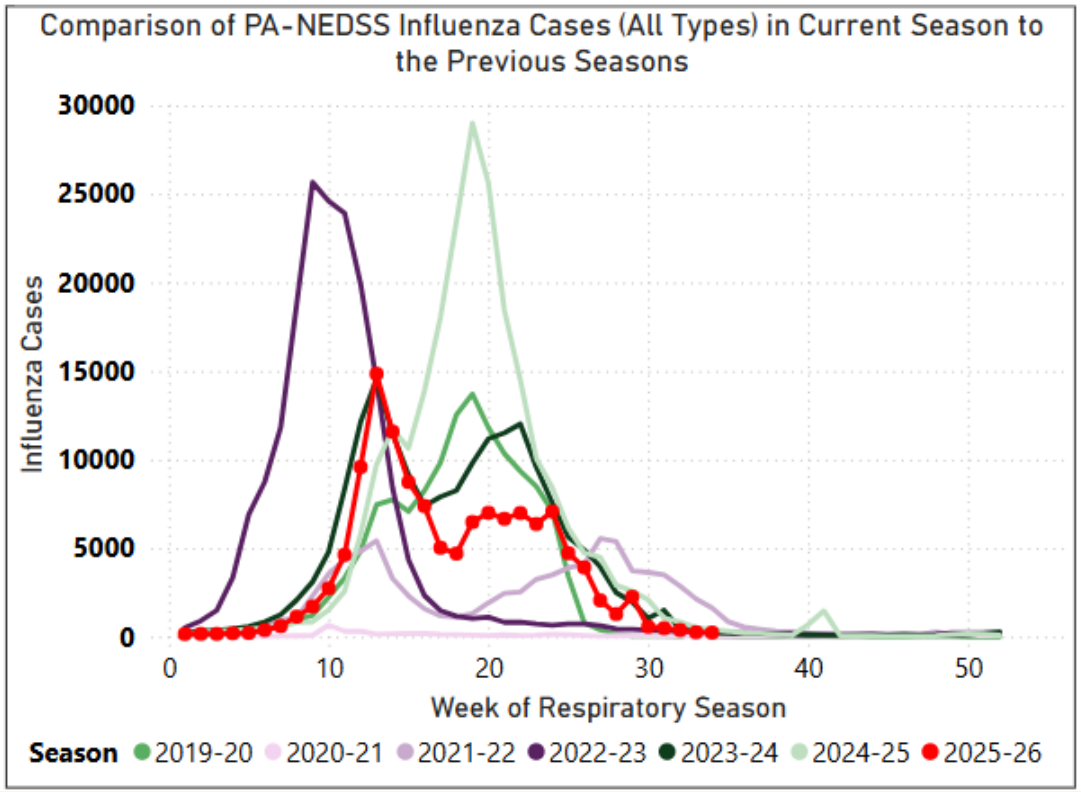
Department of Health Communications and Resources

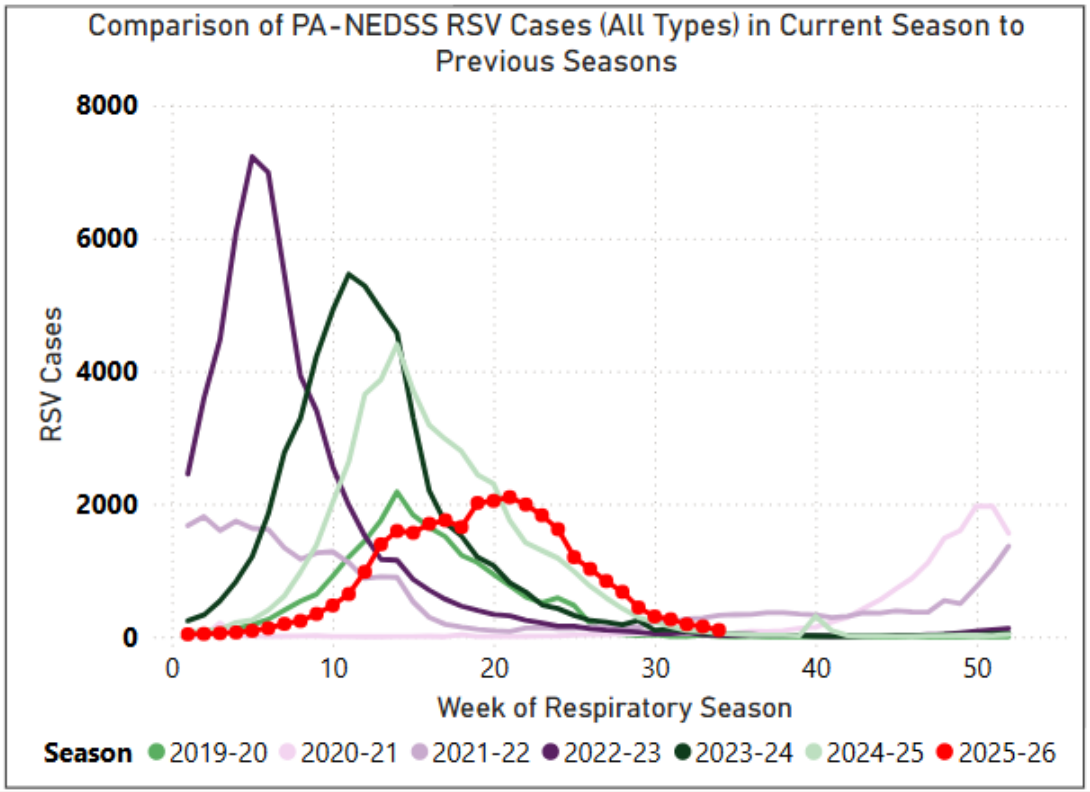
DOH Respiratory Virus Dashboard

Seasonal Comparisons for Influenza and RSV

Pennsylvania Department of Health

Important Note: For seasons that include MMWR week 53, such as the 2025–26 season, counts for MMWR weeks 52 and 53 were averaged to avoid interruptions in the trendline. This is reflected on the graphs below for week 12 (MMWR week 52).

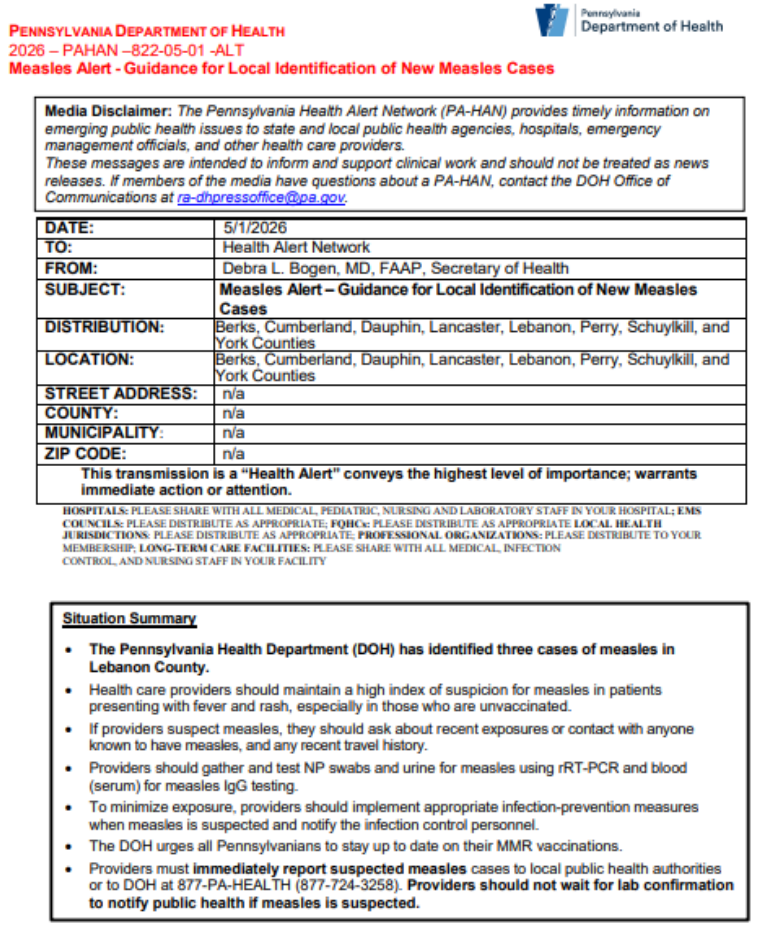




Source: [DOH Respiratory Virus Dashboard]

PA Health Alert Network (HAN)

Measles: May 2026



PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
2026 – PAHAN –822-05-01 -ALT
Measles Alert - Guidance for Local Identification of New Measles Cases

Pennsylvania Department of Health

Media Disclaimer: *The Pennsylvania Health Alert Network (PA-HAN) provides timely information on emerging public health issues to state and local public health agencies, hospitals, emergency management officials, and other health care providers.*
These messages are intended to inform and support clinical work and should not be treated as news releases. If members of the media have questions about a PA-HAN, contact the DOH Office of Communications at ra-dhpressoffice@pa.gov.

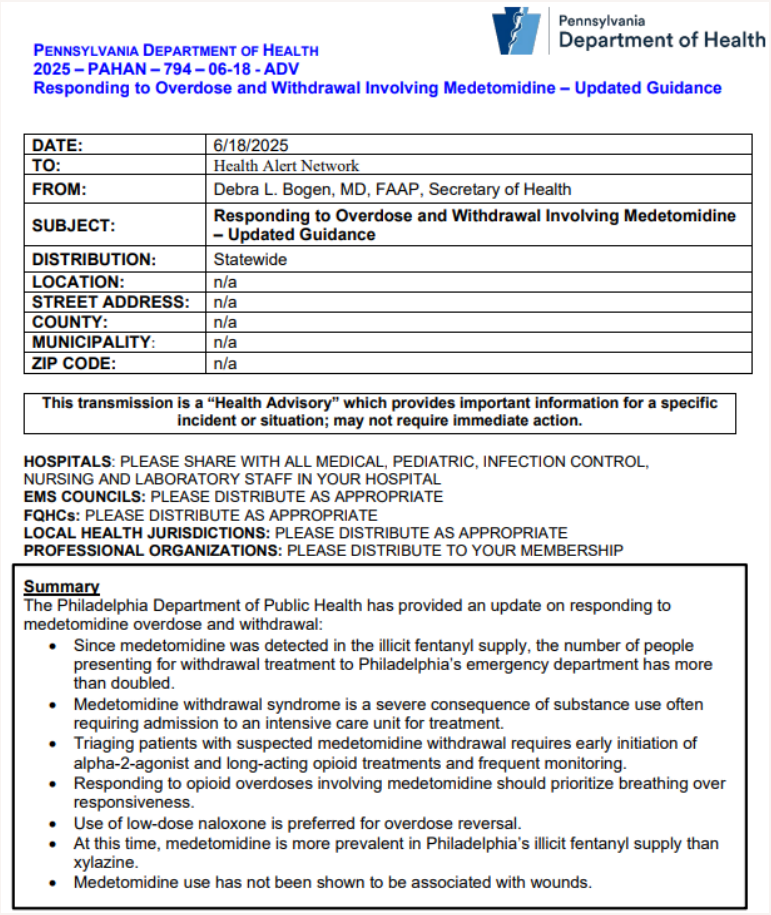
DATE:	5/1/2026
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Debra L. Bogen, MD, FAAP, Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	**Measles Alert – Guidance for Local Identification of New Measles Cases**
DISTRIBUTION:	Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, Schuylkill, and York Counties
LOCATION:	Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, Schuylkill, and York Counties
STREET ADDRESS:	n/a
COUNTY:	n/a
MUNICIPALITY:	n/a
ZIP CODE:	n/a
This transmission is a "Health Alert" conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.	

HOSPITALS: PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, PEDIATRIC, NURSING AND LABORATORY STAFF IN YOUR HOSPITAL; **EMS COUNCILS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE; **FQHCs:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE **LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTIONS**: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE; **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP; **LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES:** PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, INFECTION CONTROL, AND NURSING STAFF IN YOUR FACILITY

Situation Summary

- **The Pennsylvania Health Department (DOH) has identified three cases of measles in Lebanon County.**
- Health care providers should maintain a high index of suspicion for measles in patients presenting with fever and rash, especially in those who are unvaccinated.
- If providers suspect measles, they should ask about recent exposures or contact with anyone known to have measles, and any recent travel history.
- Providers should gather and test NP swabs and urine for measles using rRT-PCR and blood (serum) for measles IgG testing.
- To minimize exposure, providers should implement appropriate infection-prevention measures when measles is suspected and notify the infection control personnel.
- The DOH urges all Pennsylvanians to stay up to date on their MMR vaccinations.
- Providers must **immediately report suspected measles** cases to local public health authorities or to DOH at 877-PA-HEALTH (877-724-3258). **Providers should not wait for lab confirmation to notify public health if measles is suspected.**

Medetomidine: Dec. 2024



Pennsylvania Department of Health

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
2025 – PAHAN – 794 – 06-18 - ADV
Responding to Overdose and Withdrawal Involving Medetomidine – Updated Guidance

DATE:	6/18/2025
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Debra L. Bogen, MD, FAAP, Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	**Responding to Overdose and Withdrawal Involving Medetomidine – Updated Guidance**
DISTRIBUTION:	Statewide
LOCATION:	n/a
STREET ADDRESS:	n/a
COUNTY:	n/a
MUNICIPALITY:	n/a
ZIP CODE:	n/a

This transmission is a "Health Advisory" which provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

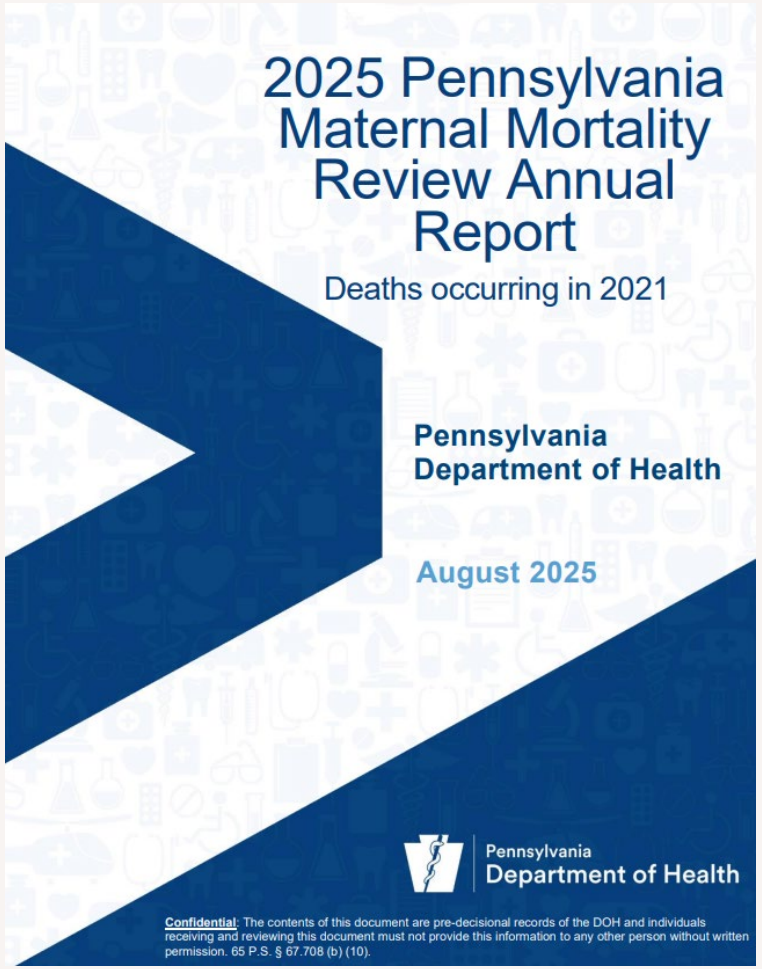
HOSPITALS: PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, PEDIATRIC, INFECTION CONTROL, NURSING AND LABORATORY STAFF IN YOUR HOSPITAL
EMS COUNCILS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE
FQHCs: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE
LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTIONS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE
PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Summary
The Philadelphia Department of Public Health has provided an update on responding to medetomidine overdose and withdrawal:

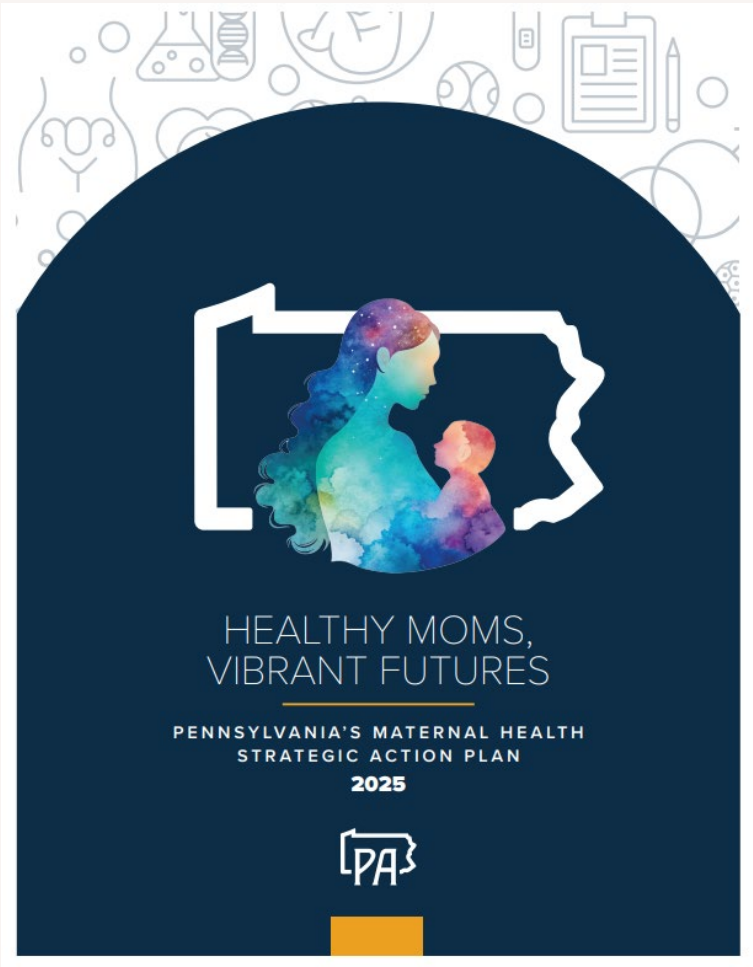
- Since medetomidine was detected in the illicit fentanyl supply, the number of people presenting for withdrawal treatment to Philadelphia's emergency department has more than doubled.
- Medetomidine withdrawal syndrome is a severe consequence of substance use often requiring admission to an intensive care unit for treatment.
- Triaging patients with suspected medetomidine withdrawal requires early initiation of alpha-2-agonist and long-acting opioid treatments and frequent monitoring.
- Responding to opioid overdoses involving medetomidine should prioritize breathing over responsiveness.
- Use of low-dose naloxone is preferred for overdose reversal.
- At this time, medetomidine is more prevalent in Philadelphia's illicit fentanyl supply than xylazine.
- Medetomidine use has not been shown to be associated with wounds.

Source: PA Health Alert Network

DOH Reports

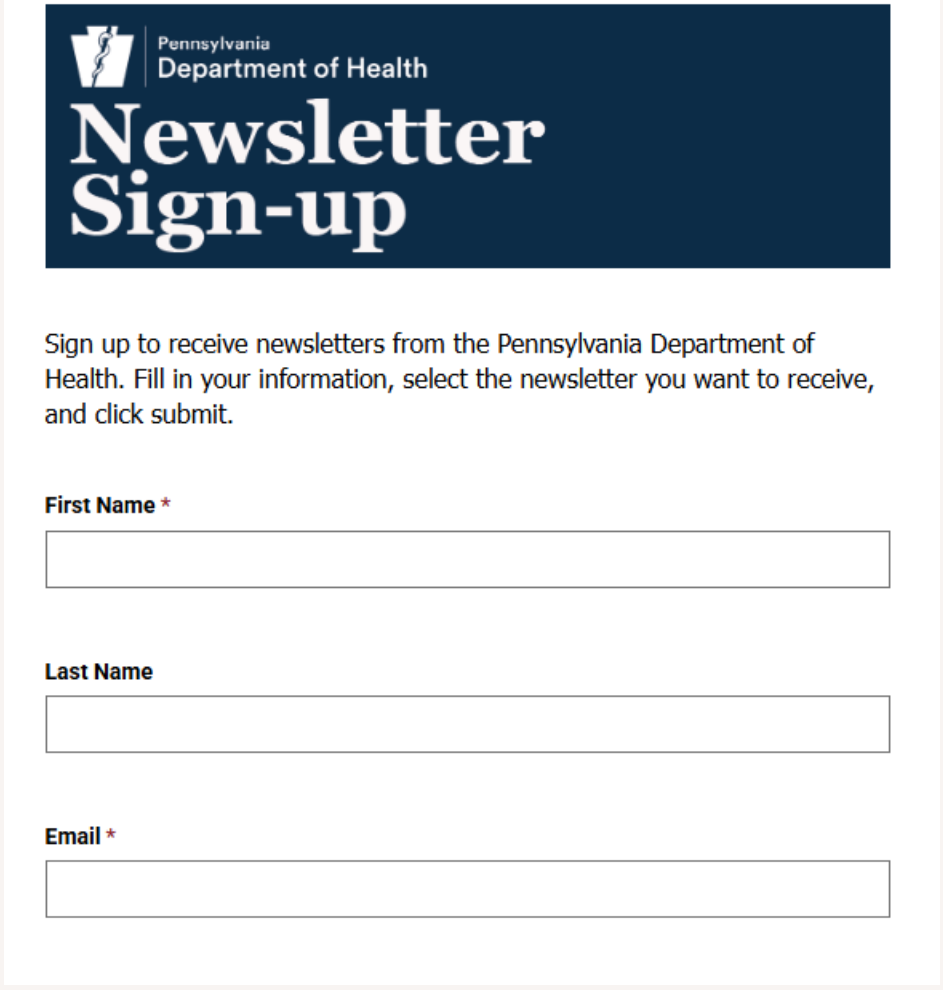


[2025 PA Maternal Mortality Review Annual Report]



[Maternal Health Strategic Plan]

Stay informed with DOH Newsletters


Pennsylvania
Department of Health

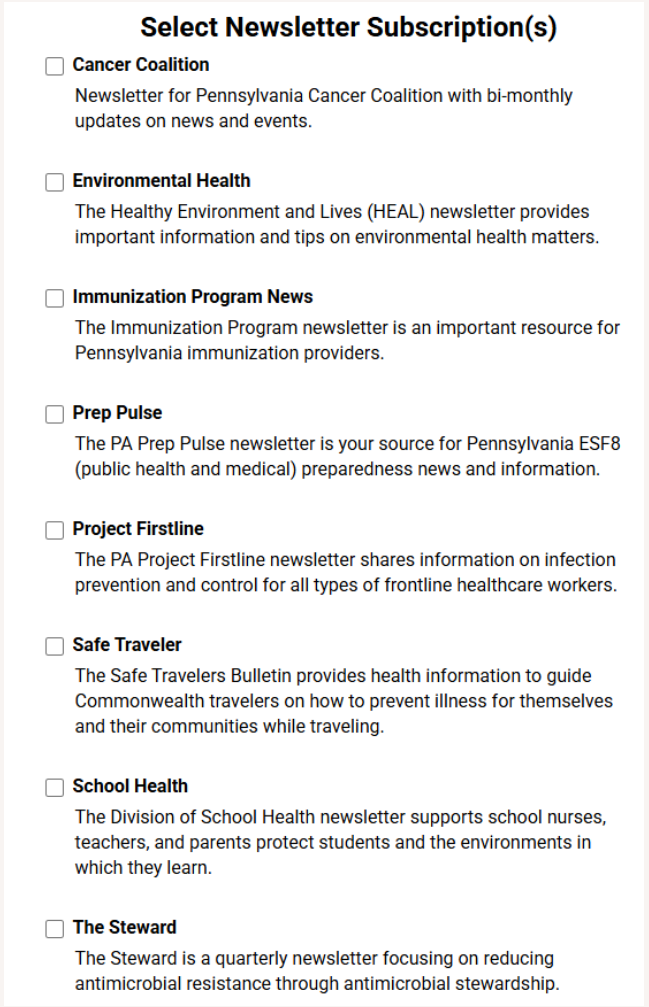
Newsletter Sign-up

Sign up to receive newsletters from the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Fill in your information, select the newsletter you want to receive, and click submit.

First Name *

Last Name

Email *


Select Newsletter Subscription(s)

- **Cancer Coalition**
  Newsletter for Pennsylvania Cancer Coalition with bi-monthly updates on news and events.
- **Environmental Health**
  The Healthy Environment and Lives (HEAL) newsletter provides important information and tips on environmental health matters.
- **Immunization Program News**
  The Immunization Program newsletter is an important resource for Pennsylvania immunization providers.
- **Prep Pulse**
  The PA Prep Pulse newsletter is your source for Pennsylvania ESF8 (public health and medical) preparedness news and information.
- **Project Firstline**
  The PA Project Firstline newsletter shares information on infection prevention and control for all types of frontline healthcare workers.
- **Safe Traveler**
  The Safe Travelers Bulletin provides health information to guide Commonwealth travelers on how to prevent illness for themselves and their communities while traveling.
- **School Health**
  The Division of School Health newsletter supports school nurses, teachers, and parents protect students and the environments in which they learn.
- **The Steward**
  The Steward is a quarterly newsletter focusing on reducing antimicrobial resistance through antimicrobial stewardship.

Signup for the newsletters here

Other DOH Resources

Data

- State Health Assessment (SHA) & dashboard
- State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) & dashboard
- Enterprise Data Dissemination Informatics Exchange (EDDIE)
- Respiratory virus dashboard
- Health statistics webpage

Vaccine Info

- General immunization guidance
- School immunization webpage
- PIERS Public Portal
- Measles

Stay Informed

- 877-PA-HEALTH
- PA Bulletin

Education

- PA TRAIN