Database of State Vaccine Exemption Laws
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Background and Rationale

Vaccination issues reported by media include:
- Public questioning of vaccine effectiveness and safety and refusal to take recommended and required vaccines;
- Tension between pediatricians and parents;
- VICP awards exceeding $2 billion;
- Outbreaks of vaccine-targeted disease;
- Waning vaccine immunity and failures;
- Rapid growth in vaccine sales and vaccine immunity and failures;
- Waning vaccine immunity and failures;
- Expanding state vaccination mandates linked to childcare and public school admission;
- Current legislative efforts in numerous states related to access to non-medical vaccine exemptions.

However, no comprehensive, validated and publicly available repository of vaccination-related law exists hindering public health and legal scholar efforts to evaluate variations in state non-medical exemption and requirement laws and differences in vaccine coverage and communicable disease rates. This project addresses the gap in legal database access.

Codebook

- Provides general project background information including the methods used to code approximately 2,000 current US vaccination statutes and regulations from 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- PostgreSQL database platform and ASP.Net programming were used.
- Reflecting statutes and regulation language, the terms “immunization” and “vaccination” are used interchangeably throughout the document.

Application

- Public, free-of-charge and searchable legal database.
- Potential to investigate policy relevant questions including the relationship between the types and specific characteristics of medical and non-medical vaccine exemption laws or vaccination requirements:
  - Use of non-medical exemptions;
  - State-level vaccine uptake rates (overall and for specific diseases);
  - State-level incidence of outbreaks of communicable disease (pertussis and measles); and
  - Association with parental, medical and school official attitudes, decisions and behaviors related to vaccination.
- Additionally, other sources of data could be used to investigate predictors of variation in state laws characteristics including financial, political, economic, and socio-demographic measures.

Future Plan

- Conduct policy-relevant analyses
- Periodic database updates
- Notify potential users of database availability
  - Citations in peer-reviewed literature that use the database
- Promotion of the resource by governmental and non-governmental vaccine-related organizations through their vaccine policy and law newsletters and blogs.

Link & Contact

Link to Database Hosting Site: http://publichealthlawresearch.org/
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