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New Trump Administration Rules Limiting Contraception Access
Jeopardize Health of Adolescents, Women and Families

WASHINGTON, DC—The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM) join in opposition to the interim final rules issued today by the Trump Administration that would allow a wide range of employers to deny coverage of contraceptives for their employees and their families. The rules will also now allow employers to refuse to provide contraception on the basis of moral objections, in addition to religious ones.

“The core of pediatrics is prevention. For pediatricians, the science is clear: contraception is a safe, effective tool to prevent unintended pregnancy in women of any reproductive age, including adolescents, and to allow families to space out pregnancies, promoting healthy mothers and babies,” said AAP President Fernando Stein, MD, FAAP. “We are concerned that today’s actions not only limit access to a vital service unnecessarily, but also open the door for other businesses to decide not to offer certain kinds of physician-recommended health services due to moral objection, such as immunizations or other evidence-based preventive services. This rule sets a dangerous precedent and carries serious health consequences.”

The Affordable Care Act made important progress by requiring coverage of contraception with no cost-sharing for women and adolescents. The previous administration set up an accommodation for employees to still receive contraceptive coverage through their insurer if their employer exercised the original, narrow religious exemption. Today’s rule effectively eliminates any guarantee of such an accommodation while at the same time significantly broadening the number of employers who will claim an exemption to this important requirement for women’s health.

“Ensuring that adolescents have access to a broad range of contraceptive services is an essential element of adolescent health promotion. The Administration’s action is not based on science, and instead, allows employers to overrule medical expertise,” said SAHM President Tamera Coyne-Beasley, MD, FSAHM. “This rule is especially troubling for low-income adolescent women and families as it could put safe, appropriate contraceptives financially out of reach.”

“The decision to use safe and effective contraceptives should be made between the patient and the physician, not by politicians or employers,” said Dr. Stein. “The American Academy of Pediatrics and the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine join together to urge the White House to protect the evidence-based preventive services our patients need from political interference.”
The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 66,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults. For more information, visit www.aap.org and follow us on Twitter @AmerAcadPeds.

Founded in 1968, the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine is a multidisciplinary organization committed to improving the physical and psychosocial health and well-being of all adolescents through advocacy, clinical care, health promotion, health service delivery, professional development and research.