

April 16, 2021

Via e-mail:

Chairman James Clyburn
Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Steve Scalise
Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Subcommittee Hearing with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Rochelle P. Walensky, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony S. Fauci, and Chief Science Officer for COVID Response David Kessler.

Dear Chairman Clyburn and Ranking Member Scalise:

On behalf of Henry Schein, Inc., we submit this statement for the record in connection with the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus hearing on **Vaccination Progress and Need for Continued Measures to Defeat Virus**.

Henry Schein is the world's largest provider of healthcare products and services to office-based physicians and dentists, serving more than a million practitioners across the globe. Our unique relationship with doctors gives us an important perspective on the valuable role they play in the healthcare infrastructure. Often the first stop when someone feels ill, physicians are a trusted resource for information, especially for those hesitant to take the vaccine. They know their patients intimately and, serve as a critical ally in any vaccine campaign. What's more, in the U.S., doctors' offices are the location where the highest percentage of adults receive their annual flu vaccines. The overwhelming majority of children also receive their flu vaccine at a doctor's office.¹ Why is this important now?

The United States has done a tremendous job making the Covid-19 vaccine available and getting shots in arms. It has offered so many a glimpse of hope, enabling them to live with less fear and finally see their families. Yet there are still many Americans for whom the vaccine is a lingering question, and these are very people most effectively reached by their personal physician. For those people who are hesitant to get the Covid-19 vaccine, trust remains the critical issue. And while some individuals with vaccine hesitancy may not trust what they read

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/fluview/nifs-estimates-nov2018.htm>

in the media, they do trust their doctors. In fact, in a Harris poll from January, a majority of Americans said that family doctors are most trusted to say when it's safe to get the vaccine. These practitioners are also experienced in and optimally positioned to address, contextualize, and correct information fueling vaccine hesitancy that patients might access through their own research.

More effectively activating the vast network of physicians and dentists in the U.S. to join the fight to vaccinate Americans is critical at this moment in the country's vaccination efforts. Not only are they capable of helping individuals overcome hesitancy, but their offices span zip codes across the U.S. in ways that other vaccine distribution systems do not. From inner cities and suburbs to rural areas and farmland, doctors are a part of almost every community. Their administration of the annual flu shot demonstrates that doctors have the infrastructure to deliver the Covid-19 shot, especially as public health authorities increasingly suggest a long-term need for booster shots of the Covid-19 vaccine. Many physicians also reflect the diversity of the communities in which they practice, ensuring that cultural competency is practiced when having delicate discussions about the importance of vaccinations. Doctors can reach a wide range of individuals and will help our nation deliver on the promise of health equity related to vaccines. We urge the Administration and HHS to consider providing office-based practitioners, regardless of in which state they practice, meaningful access to the vaccine as part of our vaccine rollout.

Best regards,

