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**County Council reminds residents to “Roll Up Their Sleeves”  
During National Immunization Awareness Month**

Delaware County Council recognized August as National Immunization Awareness Month, reminding residents that it’s important to make sure people, from infants to elderly, are up-to-date on their vaccinations.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) targets August for Immunization Awareness Month because it’s especially important for parents of school-age children to be aware of new school regulations in effect for vaccinations. But public health officials said it is the ideal time to increase awareness about immunizations for all ages, including adults.

“Immunizations are the most successful and cost-effective public health tools for preventing disease and death,” said County Council Chairman Jack Whelan. “Vaccines have eradicated some diseases and greatly reduced the number of cases of other diseases such as measles, diphtheria and pertussis. By staying current on recommended vaccines, people can protect themselves, their families and our communities from serious, life-threatening illnesses.”

Dr. George Avetian, the County Senior Medical Advisor, reminds parents that there are new immunization requirements in Pennsylvania that require that children in all grade levels receive an additional dose of varicella vaccine, a second dose of mumps vaccine and a complete three-dose series of Hepatitis B vaccine.

The regulations also require that students in seventh grade have one dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine and one dose of tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap.)

“These vaccines are safe and effective,” Dr. Avetian said. “They undergo rigorous safety, efficacy, potency and purity monitoring.”

He said families should check with their physicians before their children return to school or college.

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*(Immunizations continued)*

Dr. Avetian also reminds residents of all ages that booster immunizations are recommended throughout life for some vaccines. There is also a vaccination for Zoster (shingles) recommended for people age 60 and older and a pneumococcal vaccine for adults.

“Vaccines not only protect those who have been vaccinated, but also help prevent the spread of disease to unvaccinated individuals,” Dr. Avetian said. “Vaccines help keep all Delaware County residents healthy by keeping infectious diseases under control.”

Dr. Avetian said there are several programs that can help people afford vaccines if they don't have health insurance coverage. The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program assists children younger than 19 who are Medicaid-eligible. The “Pharmacy Act” also allows some pharmacists to administer immunizations.

The National Immunization Awareness resolution was accepted by Helen McGoohan, assistant director of the County Department of Intercommunity Health, and members of the Delaware County Immunization Coalition.

To mark National Immunization Awareness Month, the Delaware County Coalition is joining other immunization coalitions in hosting Adult Immunization Awareness Night with the Philadelphia Phillies, Aug. 17 at Citizen's Bank Park.

The County Department of Intercommunity Health is also making two immunizations charts available on the County Web site or at the ICH office in the Government Center. One document details the new school vaccination requirements in Pennsylvania. The second chart details the recommended adult immunization schedule from the Centers for Disease Control.

For additional information, people can contact the County ICH at 610-891-5311 or visit [www.co.delaware.pa.us](http://www.co.delaware.pa.us).

They can also visit [www.VaccinesforLife.com](http://www.VaccinesforLife.com).