

My name is Faisal Siddiqui, and I am a pediatrician at CHI St. Alexius Health. I am writing this statement as an advocate of the children whom I take care of. It is my utmost duty to work towards providing a safe environment for children. I want to express my support for vaccination, and I believe that no one should be discriminated against for their decision to receive or not receive a vaccine. In fact, these words of vaccination and discrimination should not be used together.

The purpose of my statement is to provide information and share my personal perspective on the importance of vaccination, especially in healthcare settings and schools.

Vaccines are a safe and effective way to protect ourselves and others from infectious diseases. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of vaccination in preventing the spread of disease and saving lives. While everyone has the right to make their own healthcare decisions, it's important to recognize that choosing not to get vaccinated can have serious consequences for both the individual and the community. Vaccines have been instrumental in eradicating or greatly reducing the prevalence of many deadly diseases such as smallpox, polio, measles, and rubella. They have also been crucial in preventing outbreaks of illnesses that can cause serious harm, such as meningitis, whooping cough, and pneumonia. People who don't get themselves vaccinated put themselves at higher risk of contracting disease in severe form compared to vaccinated individuals.

As a pediatrician, I have seen firsthand the impact of infectious diseases on individuals and communities. Just in this current winter season, we have seen the hospital systems being overwhelmed with influenza infection, and most sick individuals were those who did not receive their vaccination. Vaccines have a crucial role in preventing outbreaks and keeping people healthy. I believe that by getting vaccinated, we are not only protecting ourselves but also showing respect and consideration for those around us. It should be mandatory for the kids in school and high-risk individuals like healthcare staff to get vaccinated so they can protect themselves and others and stop the spread of infection. On the other hand, we should also work extensively on educating and providing awareness to people with quality scientific evidence so the disbelief against vaccination can be addressed.

In conclusion, I strongly support vaccination as a means of protecting public health, and I believe that everyone should have access to vaccines regardless of their personal beliefs or circumstances. At the same time, I also believe that with proper awareness and education, we can end this dilemma of discrimination or stigmatization based on vaccination status.

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