UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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PERSONNEL AND READINESS

OCT 2 3 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS

SUBJECT: Use of Next-Generation Smallpox Vaccines

In accordance with Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 6205.02, "DoD Immunization Program," July 23, 2019, as amended, and Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Clarifying Guidance for Smallpox and Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program," November 12, 2015, smallpox vaccination remains a DoD readiness requirement against this devastating disease for at-risk military personnel.

The next-generation smallpox vaccines, to include the Bavarian Nordic JYNNEOS™ vaccine, demonstrate equivalent effectiveness and a superior safety profile relative to the second-generation U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved ACAM2000®, the live-replicating vaccinia vaccine currently in use by DoD. The JYNNEOS™ vaccine was approved for pre-event smallpox vaccination and Mpox (monkeypox) prevention by the FDA in 2019. JYNNEOS™ was widely used during the 2022 global Mpox outbreak. The improved safety profile of JYNNEOS™ includes no known risks of autoinoculation or contact transmission, and no known enhanced risks to immunosuppressed individuals, eliminating key potential contraindications present with ACAM2000®.

Pursuant to the requirements of DoDI 6205.02, DoD Components will take necessary actions to ensure JYNNEOS™ replaces ACAM2000® as the primary pre-event smallpox vaccine for use in at-risk DoD Service members, members of the DoD expeditionary workforce, select laboratory workers, and first responders. The use of ACAM2000® will be reserved for post-exposure prophylaxis. ACAM2000® may be used for pre-exposure vaccination purposes only in exceptional circumstances should pre-event requirements overwhelm available JYNNEOS™ supplies. Use of ACAM2000® for pre-exposure vaccination purposes requires written approval from the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs (ASD(HA)).

The ASD(HA) will ensure sufficient supplies of JYNNEOS™ vaccine are available to meet operational needs. The ASD(HA) will also support DoD research initiatives related to JYNNEOS™ vaccine, to include studies on safety and efforts to identify best practices for vaccine booster intervals.

My point of contact for this memorandum is [redacted]

Ashish S. Vazirani
Acting

cc:
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