



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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From: **David C. Rose, MD, MBA, FAAP, Chair, State Health Commissioner's Advisory Council on Health Disparity & Health Equity (ACHDHE), Virginia Department of Health (VDH)**

Date: January 13, 2026:

In response to the July 8, 2025, presentation on “**Overview of VDH Measles Disease Planning**” presented to the ACHDHE by Christy **Gray**, Director, Division of Immunization, Meredith **Robinson**, Vaccine Preventable Diseases Epidemiologist, and Maria **Reppas**, Director, Office of Communications, VDH, we respectfully, present the following recommendations:

- The VDH implement methods to collect, analyze, and report measles vaccination rates by disability status. Additionally, all public communications should be made accessible to individuals with disabilities by using plain language, multiple languages, and American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation. VDH should also ensure that individuals eligible for booster vaccines are properly identified, reached, and informed about where to find additional information.
- Given the significant threat that misinformation poses to measles prevention efforts, VDH implement consistent and ongoing communication strategies. These strategies must be culturally and linguistically tailored to address the diverse language needs within communities. Additionally, VDH should actively promote the availability of free measles vaccines for low-income adults to increase vaccination coverage and reduce disparities.

In response to the July 8, 2025, presentation on “**Virginia Cancer Program Overview**,” presented to the ACHDHE by Nikkia L.G. **Ray**, Director, Virginia Cancer Registry, and Jackie **Knight Wilt**, Cancer Senior Epidemiologist, VDH, we respectfully, present the following recommendations:

- The VDH should explore systematic methods to collect, analyze, and report cancer rates by disability status and assess how disparities are addressed to clearly show the impact of cancer reduction efforts across diverse groups.
- While challenges such as healthcare access, cultural factors, federal policies, and misinformation are acknowledged, the program's strengths in outreach and data management are valuable assets. Therefore, we recommend that VDH enhance community engagement efforts for cancer awareness and expand surveillance of acute care to include free clinics and similar settings.

Signed: David C. Rose

David C. **Rose**, MD, MBA, FAAP, ACHDHE Chair