



ALABAMA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS  
LARRY D. DIXON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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June 12, 1996

Dear

On May 15, 1996, the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners considered the April 8, 1996, inquiry from Visiting Nursing Association, Brookwood OHO, American Lung Association and First American Home Care concerning community influenza immunization programs. The Board instructed that I forward this response to you.

Specifically, you asked the following: "Can a physician, pursuant to a written protocol, issue a valid standing order for a nurse to administer an influenza vaccine to individuals when the physician has never met or examined those individuals or established a physician/patient relationship?" Your inquiry presumes that no physician/patient relationship has been established, given the fact situation of the influenza immunization programs as stated in paragraph three of your letter.

The Board of Medical Examiners specifically declines to express any opinion as to whether the fact situation of the influenza immunization programs as stated in your letter creates a physician/patient relationship between the physician issuing a standing order to administer the influenza vaccine and the recipient of the vaccine. The Board has reviewed the manner in which the influenza vaccination programs are being managed by physician, Medical Directors and, for that limited fact situation which is stated in your letter, the management of these programs is appropriate.

This opinion is limited to the administration of influenza vaccines in a community influenza vaccine program.

Sincerely,  
Alabama Board of Medical Examiners

Larry D. Dixon

LDD/mlm