Measles Outbreaks and Vaccination Exemptions

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), increasing numbers of unvaccinated individuals in the U.S. may be leading to a rise in outbreaks of measles, especially when those individuals reside in close contact with measles abroad and bring it into the U.S. The disease then spreads in communities and measles outbreaks have begun when unvaccinated international travelers are infected with measles.

The Department of Health (DOH) in Hawaii has voted to propose amendments to their Childhood Immunization exemptions policy. The proposed amendments update Hawaii's Childhood Immunization policy and conform with current national recommendations. The proposed amendments would include:

- Remoting Department of Health authority to establish the Childhood Immunization Exemption
- Expanding exemptions to allow conscientious objection for any childhood immunizations
- Requiring all public, private, and charter schools to verify the completeness of immunizations upon school entry and students who have not complied with the immunization requirements would need to have their documentation reviewed by the school nurse.
- Removing the requirement that the department of health report data regarding the number of exemptions as a part of HAR 11 0.91%
- Increased awareness of the need for vaccination

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