

Sample Position Paper Outline

Committee:

Topic A

Country

Delegate

School

Part I: Your Country (The bulk of the paper)

a. Country Profile/Background

Note: relevant information may change based upon the committee that your country is in and the topic being discussed.

b. Country's Position on Topic

Part II: The United Nations (2-3 paragraphs)

a. Summary of past relevant United Nations action/intervention

b. Summary of Current United Nations Action

Part III: Solutions (1-2 paragraphs)

- a. summarize your proposed solutions to the issue, whether it be based off of your countries current policy, United Nations Policy, or a solution of your own imagination that your country would likely support.

Part IV: Works Cited

- a. Source all websites/books/ journals used in MLA format with in-text citations

Committee: World Health Organization
Topic A: Global Use of Vaccines
Country: United States of America
Delegate: Abigail Zeiner
School: University of Connecticut

The United States of America is a North American country with a population of 321 million individuals. This large population has turned the United States into a melting pot of many cultures, religions, languages, and ethnicities. The majority of the population, roughly 81%, lives in an urbanized region of the country, decreasing the number of individuals who experience geographic barriers to accessing healthcare (The World Factbook: The United States).

Unfortunately, barriers for health care access still exist for many the United States' citizens. Before the implementation many provisions of the Affordable Care Act in 2014, there was an estimated 41 million uninsured Americans. As of October 2014, the country's insurance exchange and expanded Medicaid eligibility have granted 16 million Americans more affordable health insurance coverage (Key Facts about the Uninsured Population). This expansion of insurance coverage is vital to the expansion of vaccine coverage within the United States. Without insurance, vaccines are likely to be unaffordable for patients without other third party help. Many vaccines require multiple shots in a scheduled period of time to ensure maximal effectiveness. For example, the vaccine Gardasil, is a three shot series given to adolescents over a six month period to help prevent certain types of HPV. The strains of HPV targeted by the vaccine also help to prevent several forms of cancer in men and women. Each one of these shots cost 130 to 140 US dollars to purchase directly from the drug companies. When additional fees such as the costs from administration and storage, an uninsured individual can easily spend 500 US dollars on the vaccine series (HPV Vaccine).

Vaccination rates in the United States hover around 90% for many diseases. As of 2014, 98% of people in the United States had received at least one dose of the diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus vaccine. Other vaccines have a lower coverage rate in the United States, such as the vaccine for the rotavirus. For this vaccines, 83% of the country has received the first dose of the vaccine, and only an estimated 69% of citizens have received the full series (WHO Vaccine-preventable Diseases: Monitoring System). Although these numbers might seem respectable, many lower income countries have higher vaccination than the United States. For example, the United States came in 114th worldwide for measles vaccination rates in 2013. The United States had an estimated 91% of children under the age of 1 vaccinated against the disease. Unfortunately, for a disease that is considered by many to be almost eradicated from the United States, (Noack) the number of reported cases and outbreaks of the disease have been increasing over the last few years. The most commonly diagnosed vaccine preventable disease in the United States, however, is pertussis. An estimated 28,532 individuals were diagnosed with the disease in 2014 (WHO Vaccine-preventable Diseases: Monitoring System).

Overtime, vaccination practices in the United States and around the world have changed due to the development of newer or more comprehensive vaccines or changes in the targeted disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a government run health agency, considers each of these factors, along with numerous others to come up with vaccine schedule recommendations for adults and children in the United States. The CDC also provides information to the public and healthcare professionals about each vaccine, the population it should be used in, and any possible safety concerns (Vaccines & Immunizations). Although there are not mandated vaccinations in the US, state laws or institution policies can require vaccinations for certain settings.

For example, it might be required that a child attending school or day care in a given state be vaccinated against specific diseases. It can also be the policy of a workplace, such as a hospital, to have their employees receive certain vaccinations. However, in these cases there are exemptions for individuals who cannot or choose not to be vaccinated due to health, religious, or moral reasons (State Vaccination Requirements).

There is little debate within the United States that the disease prevented by vaccines are dangerous. Where much of the public debate comes from is if the perceived risks of vaccines are worth the perceived benefits (What Are Some of the Myths – and Facts – about Vaccination?). Many of the diseases currently vaccinated against within the United States, with the exception of pertussis, have fewer than 1,000 cases in the country per year (WHO Vaccine-preventable Diseases: Monitoring System). Without widespread public knowledge of the severe nature of these disease, some citizens have begun to see the benefits of vaccinating the public growing to be fewer and fewer. In addition, the perceived risks of getting vaccinated are often smaller than stated by the American mainstream and social media. They often overstate the occurrence of potential side effects or link diseases to vaccination without scientific proof. One example of this misinformation is the common belief that the Measles, Mumps, and Rubella vaccine can cause autism (What Are Some of the Myths – and Facts – about Vaccination?). There are also Americans who are opposed to vaccination for ideological reasons. These reasons can include: ethical concerns about the vaccine's source or testing (animals or stem cells) or religious/personal beliefs against certain types of medical intervention (Cultural Perspectives on Vaccination).

The United Nations and World Health Organization have long recognized the importance of vaccine coverage expansion, especially in the case of polio. These efforts include: The Global

Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988 and “Kick Polio Out of Africa” made in with the help of Nelson Mandela in 1996 (Jegede). One of the ways in which WHO is working to expand vaccine coverage currently is the Global Vaccine Action Plan. This plan was endorsed by 194 member states at the World Health Assembly in May 2012 (Global Vaccine Action Plan 2011 – 2020). The plan's end goal is to have each country around the world have 90% immunization coverage, and each individual district within that country to have 80% vaccine coverage by 2020 (Immunization Coverage).

Around the world, there are many organizations that the United States or citizens of the United States are involved with to increase vaccine coverage around the world. One non-governmental organization that has helped to improve vaccine coverage in lower income countries is the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The goal of this foundation is “to prevent more than 11 million deaths, 3.9 million disabilities, and 264 million illnesses by 2020 through high, equitable, and sustainable vaccine coverage and support for polio eradication” (Vaccine Delivery). Thus far, the organization has dedicated 2.5 billion US dollars to this cause (Vaccine Delivery). Although there are numerous other non-governmental organizations from the United States working to expand vaccine coverage, governmental organizations to help stop the spread of disease exist as well. The CDC is currently involved in several vaccine initiatives including the Stop Transmission of Polio Plan (STOP) and The Measles and Rubella Initiative. Each of these initiatives aim to increase immunization rates for these diseases around the world, and eventually lead to their eradication (Measles & Rubella, Stop Transmission of Polio (STOP) Program).

The United States of America recognizes the vital nature of each individual, governmental organization, and non-governmental organization that dedicates their time and money to help expand vaccine coverage and eradicate vaccine preventable diseases. One solution for this

committee to consider is a way for each of these individual efforts to achieve this end goal collaborate and integrate with one another. This solution could lead to expansion of current programs, leading to a greater number of individuals reached, and a more efficient use of time, money, and resources.

Works Cited

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