

May 29, 2019

Mark Pallansch, PhD
Director, Division of Viral Diseases
National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Atlanta, GA

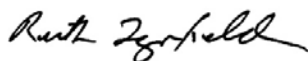
Dear Dr. Pallansch:

In fall 2018, Minnesota experienced an increase in the number of cases of acute flaccid myelitis (AFM). To date, there have been 11 confirmed AFM cases in Minnesota with onset during 2018 compared with four during 2014-2017. No common exposures have been identified among the cases and the risk factors for developing this disease are not well understood. We are more broadly investigating these 2018 cases in an effort to better understand common exposures among AFM patients. In addition, we are investigating anecdotal information suggesting that diagnosis might have been delayed in some cases, perhaps due to a lack of awareness about AFM by healthcare providers.

We are writing to formally request assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with this investigation. Specifically, assistance is needed to administer a comprehensive hypothesis-generating questionnaire to AFM patients with the objectives of identifying common exposures and describing the healthcare seeking behaviors of AFM patients and their families prior to the AFM diagnosis. The results from this investigation will be used to help develop prevention and control measures and identify gaps in clinician awareness that can be targeted through public health messaging. This activity will remain under the direction and supervision of Minnesota Department of Health. The Department will retain ownership of all data collected.

Thank you for consideration of this request. The Minnesota Department of Health appreciates the support and assistance of the CDC to help protect the public health of the citizens of Minnesota.

Sincerely,



Ruth Lynfield, MD
State Epidemiologist and Medical Director
Minnesota Department of Health