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September 29, 2022

Juliane Caviston, Ph.D.  
Science Policy, Planning, and Analysis  
NIH Office of Research on Women's Health

Submitted electronically to: [RFI submission website](#) and  
[NIHWideSPWH@nih.gov](mailto:NIHWideSPWH@nih.gov)

**RE: NIH Request for Information (RFI) on NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for  
Research on the Health of Women (Notice Number: NOT-OD-22-186)**

Dear Dr. Caviston:

Established in 1943, the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI) is a professional organization with more than 6,700 members in the United States, Canada and 72 other countries. This membership includes allergist/immunologists, other medical specialists, allied health and related healthcare professionals—all with a special interest in the research and treatment of patients with allergic and immunologic diseases.

In the paragraph that follows, we provide feedback on this issue:

*Emerging research needs and opportunities that reflect the changing landscape of the study of the health of women that should be added to the plan*

We urge that increased investment in emerging research is needed regarding the safety of asthma medications used during pregnancy. Medication non-adherence is a major trigger for asthma exacerbations, which can be dangerous for both the mother and baby. Unfortunately, an estimated one third of women with asthma may choose to discontinue using their asthma controller medications early in their pregnancy due to fears of fetal toxicity, or simply due to overall uncertainty about the use of medications during pregnancy. Thus an overwhelming and under-addressed need exists to provide evidence to the public on the risks and benefits of use of controller medication for asthma during pregnancy.

**(more)**

It is understandable that mothers are concerned about the safety of their children and the effect of medications taken during pregnancy, particularly as social media enables an increase in dangerous misinformation about pharmaceuticals and other treatments. With additional evidence through research, we can reduce anxiety regarding medication safety to improve asthma control for these patients.

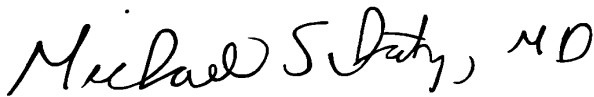
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We appreciate the opportunity to provide our perspectives on the aforementioned topics. Should you have any questions, or if we may be of any further assistance, please contact Sheila Heitzig, Director of Practice and Policy, at sheitzig@AAAAI.org or (414) 272-6071.

Sincerely,



David A. Khan, MD FAAAAI  
President, American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology



Michael Schatz, MD MS FAAAAI, AAAAI PI, Vaccines and Medications in Pregnancy Surveillance System (VAMPSS)



Jennifer A. Namazy, MD FAAAAI, Chair, AAAAI Women's Health in Allergy/Immunology Committee