Memorandum to Presidents

Date: May 29, 1973
From: Office of the Vice Chancellor for University-Wide Services and Special Programs
Subject: Vaccinia (Smallpox) Vaccination

A recent review of the medical examination form required of incoming students to State University of New York brought to our attention the fact that vaccinia (smallpox) vaccination is still listed as required. On the advice of Provost Mou, we recommend the discontinuation of this requirement.

Recent studies and subsequent directives of the United States Public Health Service and the State Health Department indicate that the danger of exposure to smallpox, worldwide, is now greatly reduced. Endemic pockets now exist in only a few areas of Asia and Africa. The greater danger is from the vaccine itself, which annually has produced some deaths and now appears to be a greater risk than that of a small localized outbreak in the United States. In keeping with Federal and State policy, vaccinia vaccination is no longer recommended as a routine for citizens of the United States.

Retention of this requirement for admission to State University campuses seems inadvisable, so the admissions health document should be corrected by lining through this requirement or attaching a brief note when the form is sent to students. The item will be omitted from the new printing for 1974.

Please bring this matter to the attention of the appropriate member(s) of your staff.

James S. Smoot

cc: Chancellor Boyer
Distribution Sheet
May 29, 1973

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