**COVID-19 VACCINATION CLINICS: SAMPLE STATEMENT & MESSAGES**

***Updated:January 8, 2021***

**GENERAL STATEMENT**

We are pleased that those most at-risk of COVID-19 —vulnerable seniors and professional caregivers—have been prioritized to receive the vaccine. Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 is one of the best ways to protect long-term care residents and caregivers from COVID-19. This vaccine gives us hope for the next chapter in our fight against COVID-19. We want everyone in our communities who wants a vaccine to get it as soon as possible, and we are working with the State and our pharmacy partners to ensure timely access to the vaccine for all who choose vaccination.

We are encouraging everyone in our communities to get a vaccine as soon as possible, and we hope they direct questions or concerns that they may have to their primary health care provider. However, we cannot mandate that staff accept the COVID-19 vaccine. Therefore, it will continue to be important for senior living communities to follow safety protocols to protect seniors who we know are most at risk for serious consequences of COVID-19.

**Talking Points: If your Vaccine clinic is not yet scheduled**

* The news of COVID-19 vaccines entering long-term care settings is joyous, but we know you are still anxiously awaiting the day on which you get your vaccine. Be assured that we are working with the State and our pharmacy partner to make sure our vaccine clinic is scheduled as soon as possible. We will keep you informed and share as many details as we have as soon as we have them.
* Prioritization of the distribution of the vaccine in long-term care was a data-driven decision based on the unique vulnerability of those served in our setting.
* We are also eager to see the vaccine quickly distributed to those who live and work in our setting. However, we know that vaccinating the [organization name here] long-term care residents and staff will take time and effort. We look forward to the day our residents and staff have the opportunity to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

**Talking Points: Vaccine clinic scheduled**

* We are thrilled to announce that our first COVID-19 vaccine clinic will be on [insert date].
* We are encouraging everyone in our communities to get a vaccine as soon as possible, and we hope you direct questions or concerns about the vaccine itself to your primary health care provider. However, we cannot mandate that anyone accept the COVID-19 vaccine.
* The vaccine clinic day will be a joyous day, but you may have questions about what to expect. We encourage you to review the CDC’s resource [What to Expect at Your Appointment to Get Vaccinated for COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect.html).

**Talking Points: After 1st vaccine clinic**

* We are happy to announce we have completed our first vaccination clinic. The day was filled with joy and hope for the future.This was the first of three vaccine clinic dates. At the second and third clinics, residents and staff will receive the second dose required for vaccination.
* To have full benefit from the vaccine, each person must make sure that they get the second dose of the vaccine.
* Of those living in our setting, [percent of residents vaccinated]% of residents opted to be vaccinated. [Percent of staff]% of those working in our community choose to be vaccinated. This is a great start and we are eager to increase the acceptance rate at the second and third vaccine clinics.
* We are encouraging everyone in our communities to get a vaccine as soon as possible, and we hope you direct questions or concerns about the vaccine itself to your primary health care provider. However, we cannot mandate that anyone accept the COVID-19 vaccine.
* We expect to continue to see the vaccination rates among long-term care residents and staff rise as more vaccine clinics become available to them in the coming weeks.

**General Talking Points:**

* The COVID-19 vaccine is a ray of hope for many older adults who have been so cut off from their family and friends over these past many months. A successful vaccination program is a huge step forward in beating COVID.

While this is a momentous occasion that marks the next chapter in our fight against the virus, it is just the beginning of a conversation about reopening long-term care settings. We have not received word of any updated guidance from the State about visitation in our settings. As soon as we start to successfully administer the vaccine throughout Minnesota and positivity rates begin fall, we hope can begin to discuss what’s next for our community and for long-term care communities across our state.

* While we are all interested in rapid and widespread vaccination, we also understand that distribution on this scale will take some time. We are hopeful but believe patience is required as the federal and state governments continue to implement their workplans.
* Long term care facilities will not be able to return to normal visitation routines until a vaccine is administered to most residents and staff. Even then, experts are saying that most of the population will have to be vaccinated before we can return to normal.
* Please be patient about changes in safety protocols as vaccinations roll out across Minnesota. Even though the vaccine is here, the virus is still being transmitted throughout our state and we need to continue to be cautious to protect the health and well-being of residents and staff.
* Until we receive updated guidance from the State, we ask that everyone, even those not connected directly with long-term care settings, continue infection prevention and control practices—Wear a mask, wash your hands, don’t touch your face when you’re out, stay home if you’re feeling sick— These measures will help keep the positivity rate low and allow long-term care settings to employ safe and socially distanced visitation for residents.