FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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COVID-19 Update: Vaccine Maintenance Program, Nursing Home Visitation, Phase 1B Medical Conditions

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted today provided the following updates on Ohio's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

WEATHER DELAYS

As a result of continued bad weather, vaccine shipments in Ohio and across the country continue to be delayed. Ohioans with vaccine appointments this week should confirm that their appointment has not been canceled before leaving home.

Because of these weather delays, it is expected that providers will give vaccinations over the weekend as shipments arrive.

VACCINE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

This morning, Ohio launched its COVID-19 Vaccine Maintenance Program for nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Each month, facilities can host a vaccine clinic for residents and staff if there is the need for vaccinations. The program ensures that vaccinations in long-term care facilities continue for new residents and staff or current residents and staff who have now decided to be vaccinated.

NURSING HOME VISITATION

Governor DeWine announced that he has assembled a team of doctors and nurses to develop a plan for safe nursing home visitation. Members of the team are experts in infectious disease control, skilled nursing, and other types of long-term care settings.

Ohio's existing visitation order does allow compassionate care visits. Examples of compassionate care situations could include:

- A resident who was living with their family before recently being admitted to a home, is struggling with the change in environment and lack of physical family support.
- A resident who needs cueing and encouragement with eating or drinking, previously provided by family or caregiver(s), is experiencing weight loss or dehydration.
- A resident, who used to talk and interact with others, is experiencing emotional distress, seldom speaking, or crying more frequently.

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman is available to assist citizens with questions about compassionate care visits. The office can be reached at OhioOmbudsman@age.ohio.gov or 1-800-282-1206.

PHASE 1B MEDICAL CONDITIONS

This week, vaccine eligibility opened up to Ohioans born with the medical conditions outlined below, or those who were diagnosed in early childhood whose conditions continued into adulthood. Following anecdotal reports of individuals with these conditions being denied vaccination appointments, particularly those with cystic fibrosis, Governor DeWine stressed that vaccine providers should vaccinate those of any age with any of the following conditions.

VACCINE DATA COLLECTION

Governor DeWine again asked vaccine providers to collect and report accurate and complete data on vaccine administrations including race, ethnicity, age, and category of eligibility. This information is critical to understanding uptake rates among specific communities or occupations and also helps inform future policy and allocation decisions. The Ohio Department of Health will continue to reach out to all providers to make sure this critical information is being entered into the system.

RICHLAND COUNTY CLINIC

Today Lt. Governor Jon Husted traveled to Richland Public Health (RPH) in Mansfield to tour their vaccine clinic and thank the staff and healthcare providers for their efforts to distribute the COVID-19 vaccine. Most of the 100 Ohioans being vaccinated during the visit today were receiving their second dose.

To date, RPH has vaccinated 2,705 individuals (948 fully vaccinated) at their clinic that runs typically Monday-Friday.

During the press conference, Lt. Governor Husted had the opportunity to look on as two Richland County residents received their shot: Ms. Doris Rheinbolt received her second dose and Mansfield Mayor Tim Theaker received his first dose, respectively.

CURRENT CASE DATA

In total, there are 947,389 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 reported in Ohio and 16,611 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 49,061 people have been hospitalized throughout the pandemic, including 7,002 admissions to intensive care units. In-depth data can be accessed by visiting coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Video of today's full update, including versions with foreign language translation, can be viewed on the Ohio Channel's YouTube page.

For more information on Ohio's response to COVID-19, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH.

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