



For Immediate Release: Friday, January 15, 2021

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Health Care Association of Michigan, SEIU, AFSCME Partner to Encourage Safe, Effective Vaccines in Nursing Homes

Nursing Home Worker says it's important to protect yourself from the virus, listen to medical experts for vaccine information

The Health Care Association of Michigan, SEIU Healthcare Michigan, and AFSCME Council 25 are teaming up to promote vaccination in nursing homes across the state. The partnership comes as part of a major push to protect nursing home workers and the most vulnerable residents: the elderly, the immunocompromised, and those with preexisting conditions. To date, a total of 3784 residents and 35 staff have died due to COVID-19 in long-term care facilities.

Shawna Hodges, SEIU nursing home leader at Hartford Nursing & Rehab Center in Detroit, has been a certified nursing assistant for over 20 years.

“I received my first vaccine shot this week, and I am feeling great with no symptoms. As a healthcare worker in a nursing home, it’s very important to protect yourself and your residents from COVID. We continue to have a high number of COVID cases in our state. I strongly encourage other healthcare workers to get vaccinated. If you have any concerns about the vaccination, you should listen to medical experts and not misinformation on the internet.”

With phase 1A of the vaccination plan concluding soon, many nursing home workers still need to receive their first dose of the vaccine. President Andrea Acevedo hopes that the partnership with HCAM can educate workers about the vaccine and dispel some of the myths surrounding vaccination.

“We want nursing home workers to know that the vaccine is safe and effective. In clinical trials for both vaccines, over 73,000 people from the U.S. and around the world received injections, including over 25,000 people from the communities most impacted by COVID-19, including Black, Latinx, and older people,” said Acevedo. “Both vaccines were found 94% effective in trials, and provide a powerful immunity against the virus after the second dose.”

Acevedo received her first dose of the COVID-19 vaccination last week as part of a partnership with Ciena Healthcare and reported she is feeling fine with only minor soreness in her shoulder.

Health Care Association of Michigan President/CEO Melissa Samuel stated that no significant safety concerns were identified in development of the vaccine, and residents and staff can be very confident in its safety and effectiveness.



“The dedicated caregivers in Michigan’s nursing homes have been on the front lines of this pandemic, and their sacrifices have been extraordinary and inspiring,” said Samuel. “I am grateful they were made a top priority to be vaccinated as they continue to care for our state’s most vulnerable population.”

“The coronavirus has been most unmerciful to the residents we care for. We are very hopeful this vaccine will not only be a lifesaver for residents and staff, but also expedite the reopening of our facilities to family members and loved ones.”

AFSCME Council 25 President Lawrence A. Roehrig also emphasized the importance of nursing home staff receiving the vaccine.

“We owe it to the patients we care for, our families and loved ones, and the hundreds of thousands of Americans and millions worldwide that have succumbed to this horrible virus to get vaccinated. COVID-19 has ravaged our healthcare facilities and health systems for nearly a year, but we are finally turning a corner to a brighter future. Healthcare workers are trusted community leaders and the heroes that have pushed us through this pandemic, and we are thrilled that they are rightfully prioritized in this process. We encourage everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated as soon as possible. It WILL save lives.”

SEIU Healthcare Michigan represents over 6,000 nursing home workers in more than 66 facilities in Michigan, including a majority in metro Detroit.

HCAM is a statewide trade association representing 356 nursing facilities, including proprietary, not for profit, county medical and hospital-based long-term skilled nursing and rehabilitation facilities.

American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 25 represents nearly 40,000 public sector workers across Michigan who keep our communities running, including many hospitals, nursing homes, state psychiatric hospitals, community mental health agencies, and other healthcare facilities.

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