

### ***New Hampshire Public Health Association Urges COVID-19 Vaccination of New Hampshire Residents***

The New Hampshire Public Health Association (NHPHA ) supports and encourages statewide efforts to provide increased access to COVID-19 vaccines to achieve population immunity. Further, NHPHA calls on the Legislature to provide funding that will aid local efforts to promote vaccine access. NHPHA encourages consistent guidance for our communities. Local partnerships, best informed about their own communities' needs, are also best positioned to help residents achieve full vaccination. Our members are connected by the desire to support healthy New Hampshire residents who can contribute to a vibrant economy. NHPHA recognizes the critical importance of vaccination to prevent the spread of disease. Specific to the current, ongoing and worsening fourth surge of COVID-19 in New Hampshire, we must increase vaccination rates to protect the public's health, to protect our health system infrastructure and to protect our economy.

Since the start of COVID-19 vaccine distribution in January, only 54% of NH residents are reported to be fully vaccinated. Although vaccine uptake was steady through June, since July, the State has reported only a 1.7% increase in those residents that are fully vaccinated. NHPHA believes this is largely due to vaccine hesitancy and inconsistent guidance around vaccination. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), all COVID-19 vaccines currently approved or authorized in the United States are effective against COVID-19, effectively reducing severe disease, hospitalization, and death. Increasing vaccination rates can and will slow the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The sooner the pandemic can be controlled, the healthier our communities and economy will be. NHPHA has been a trusted voice for New Hampshire's public health sector for more than 25 years.

Respectfully,

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