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Wolf Administration Expands Partnership with Rite Aid Pharmacy to Vaccinate Pennsylvanians Enrolled in Long-Term Services and Supports Programs

Harrisburg, PA – Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Teresa Miller today announced that Pennsylvania will expand its partnership with Rite Aid Pharmacy to vaccinate 9,000 individuals with physical disabilities and older Pennsylvanians participating in DHS' home and community-based long-term services and supports program during vaccination clinics through March and April.

This effort continues the Wolf Administration's work to ease barriers to vaccine access for Pennsylvania's seniors and people with disabilities who are most vulnerable to COVID-19. Since the first approved vaccine arrived in Pennsylvania on December 14, more than 3.7 million individuals have been vaccinated with a first dose, including more than 1.1 million individuals over the age of 65, more than 397,000 doses administered through the Federal Pharmacy Partnership to long-term care facilities, and more than 20,000 vaccines administered through the DHS/Rite Aid partnership to residents and staff of long-term and congregate care settings.

"As Pennsylvania continues to make progress vaccinating people in Phase 1A, we know that there are people who want a vaccine, but may need extra help to safely get to a vaccination site. These clinics will ease access for people who may not be as well-resourced or connected to other options for vaccines, and because of this, ensure people who are most at-risk are safe and vaccinated," said Secretary Miller. "I want to acknowledge and thank Rite Aid as well as our Community HealthChoices managed care organizations and LIFE Program partners that are making this effort possible. This partnership is ensuring that we are getting vaccine supply to communities and people that have been most affected by COVID-19 – a necessity for an equitable vaccination process."

In January, Pennsylvania established a partnership with Pennsylvania-based Rite Aid Pharmacy to administer COVID-19 vaccinations to residents and staff of DHS-licensed long-term and congregate care settings serving seniors, people with intellectual disabilities, and people with mental illness and other behavioral needs. This partnership was expanded in February to include residential treatment facilities licensed by the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.

DHS oversees two programs designed to provide older Pennsylvanians and people with physical disabilities who prefer to live in their community rather than a residential facility with services, supports, and daily care they need to safely live in their own home: Community HealthChoices (CHC) and the Living Independence for the Elderly (LIFE) program, which serve approximately 350,000 and 7,000 people statewide,

respectively. Both programs serve lower income people who qualify for Medicaid, and targeting vaccinations to populations served by these programs helps Pennsylvania reach communities that have a significant risk of complications if they contract COVID-19 but may not have the resources to secure an appointment or travel to a vaccination site on their own.

Vaccination clinics for program participants will be held around the commonwealth in coordination with CHC managed care organizations (MCOs) – AmeriHealth Caritas, PA Health & Wellness, and UPMC CHC – and LIFE program providers. This effort is limited to certain CHC and LIFE program participants and is not open to the public. CHC participants who will be vaccinated through this partnership are being identified and contacted by their MCO, which coordinates care and services on behalf of program participants. MCOs are identifying participants who have not yet received a COVID-19 vaccine and prioritizing based upon participants' risk of contracting COVID-19 and are focusing on reaching communities of color that have been disproportionately impacted by this pandemic. The CHC MCOs are coordinating scheduling and transportation for both vaccine doses for their members. LIFE provider staff who work with high-risk people in 1A will also have the opportunity to be vaccinated through these clinics if they have not been yet. Rite Aid will administer vaccines at these clinics.

Learn more about the partnership with Rite Aid and view more data [here](#).

For more information on COVID-19 vaccinations, visit the Department of Health's [website](#).