January 20, 2021

To: Guardians and Parents

From: Senior Leadership Team

ASSISTED LIVING HOMES – COVID-19 VACCINATION DISTRIBUTION UPDATE

Thank you to all who have responded to the first invitations, whether you elected for your loved one to receive the vaccine or not. Many have chosen to wait and see how the first round of vaccines affected people. Over 67,000 vaccinations have been given in the State of Alaska, including over 140 to Hope recipients and staff. We have had no cases of adverse reactions that would be considered different to receiving a flu shot (for example, soreness at the vaccine site, or tiredness the next day). A nationwide shortage of vaccines suggests this is a good time to make a decision.

For those who are still wondering about the benefits and risks of whether to get the vaccine, we encourage you to refer to the Recipient Education material at https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/hcp/mrna-vaccine-basics.html

Our medical team continues to work with the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services COVID-10 vaccination plan for priority distribution. There is no mandate by the State of Alaska to receive a vaccine so the decision still remains with the guardian or parent. Hope is not mandating the vaccine within our organization to honor our value of choice. Receiving the vaccine may offer additional health protection but it will not immediately change our policies that address reducing risk of exposure to other residents and staff. Our intent is to provide you with resources to allow you to make an informed decision.
Hope’s Policy for Assisted Living Homes includes guidance and mandates from the Federal Center for Disease Control, the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services mandates, the State of Alaska Public Health Department, Senior and Disabilities Services, the Department of Licensing, and the Municipality of Anchorage Emergency Orders. These policies are updated regularly on the Hope website www.hopealaska.org

Based on the guidance issued by the Center for Disease Control for assisted living facilities, here are some important factors to consider:

**COMMUNICATION**

The most significant challenge over the past month has been the shifting assignment of pharmacies to Hope by region.

Hope is currently working with Walgreens for Anchorage and Kenai/Soldotna regions, Carrs Safeway for Seward and Kodiak regions, CVS for Matsu region, the Public Health Department for Utqiagvik, and Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation (Kanakanak) for Dillingham.

There are risks and rewards to receiving the vaccine, and due to the newness of the vaccine, some adverse reactions are still being discovered. We strongly recommend you consult a primary care physician before signing consent for your family member or ward to receive the vaccine. Unless you have any changes or concerns, this consent form will also be used in support of the second dose (some pharmacies are requesting another form be filled out at that time).

Some items to discuss with the physician include:

- Existing health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, asthma, history of bleeding disorders
- Known allergies to latex, medications, food or vaccines, history of anaphylactic responses
- Seizure disorders requiring seizure medications, brain disorders, Guillain-Barre syndrome, or other nervous system disorders
- Previous positive COVID-19 test result
- If you have had a reaction after receiving a vaccination, including fainting or feeling dizzy
If you are pregnant or considering becoming pregnant in the next month, these conditions may not exclude a person from receiving the vaccine but additional precautions may need to be taken.

In Anchorage, Hope provided the first clinic at 570 W 53rd Avenue on January 7th, 2021, (additionally, vaccinations were provided at specific homes on other days for people who could not attend this clinic).

UPCOMING CLINICS:

Anchorage clinics will be held at 570 W 53rd Avenue on:
* Thursday, January 28th (2nd shot for Jan 7th clinic people and 1st shot for others)
* Thursday, February 18th (2nd shot for Jan 28th people).

Clinics in regions outside of Anchorage are variable in schedule based on the pharmacy partner. Please submit your consent form to COVIDvaccine@hopealaska.org and you will be contacted.

You will be notified of the appointment time so please be available by phone during the scheduled time in case there are any questions or additional authorization required by the vaccination team. A Hope nurse will also be present to assist with medical information transfer based on your authorization. Each person receiving the vaccine will be monitored on-site for at least 30 minutes afterwards for any potential adverse reaction.

Staff in the Assisted Living Homes are also eligible for the vaccine and we have worked with them to develop a staggered scheduling times to minimize their time off in the event of adverse reactions.

External – When accepting a vaccine, it is important to understand that health information will be shared through the State of Alaska’s vaccination registry and the health information exchange, unless and Opt-Out form is requested and signed.
AUTHORIZATION (INFORMED CONSENT)

Please read carefully the Vaccine Administration Record (VAR) and Informed Consent for Vaccination in Long Term Care Facility (LTCF). There are two places for signature: at the end of Section A-2, and also Section B-2.

If you would like your family member or ward to receive the vaccine, please complete and email a copy of this consent form, as well as your current phone number, back to COVIDvaccine@hopealaska.org so this can be taken to the vaccination appointments.

On the day of the appointment, Hope staff will confirm Section B-1 Screening Question #1 “Do you feel sick today?” based on the daily health screening forms completed in the Assisted Living Home.

The vaccine and the administration of the vaccine are free of charge under the vaccination program. However, if additional treatment or medication is required in response to the vaccine, there may be a co-pay or additional charges incurred.

Additional resources on the COVID-19 vaccination plan in the State of Alaska can be found at http://www.dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/vaccine.aspx or by emailing your questions to covid19vaccine@alaska.gov

We will keep you informed throughout this process but urge you to reach out to a primary care physician quickly in order to be prepared, if you are thinking of participating in these opportunities. Please monitor your email for future communications including dates of the clinics when confirmed.

Please feel free to contact me directly at (907) 433 4721, if you have any questions or wish to discuss this plan.

Sincerely,

Michael Bailey
Deputy Executive Director