Helping Alaskans with Differing Abilities Experience Hope Since 1968

December 21, 2020

To: Guardians and Parents
From: Senior Leadership Team

ASSISTED LIVING HOMES – COVID-19 VACCINATION PLANNING UPDATE

With COVID-19 vaccines now in Alaska, we are providing an update on the opportunities available to Hope’s recipients who reside in Assisted Living Homes. Our medical team has been working to ensure Hope has registered all Assisted Living Homes 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 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](http://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
- Authorization
- Clinics

**COMMUNICATION**

Currently, Hope has been identified to work with Walgreens for Anchorage vaccination clinics, and Geneva Woods for Matsu vaccinations.
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.**

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.

Hope has been offered 3 clinics for Anchorage with dates to be determined but important preparation is necessary. If you need a copy of the current Plan of Care to assist in reviewing existing conditions or diagnosis, please contact the Assisted Living Home where your family member or ward lives.

**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 from 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 appointment. 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.

**CLINICS**

In Anchorage, three clinics will be provided by Walgreen’s medical staff. We are planning to host these at the 570 W 53rd Ave, Anchorage auditorium on an appointment basis. 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 will be working with them to develop a staggered scheduling times to minimize their time off in the event of adverse reactions.

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](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 for the first available vaccination clinics, 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