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Contact: Taylor Eades, PIO
(815) 432-2483
teades@co.iroquois.il.us

PRESS RELEASE

A safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine is a critical component of the U.S. strategy to reduce COVID-19-related illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths. The Iroquois County Public Health Department (ICPHD) has been working with our local partner, Iroquois Memorial Hospital, to distribute vaccine to Iroquois County residents in accordance with the State of Illinois Mass Vaccination Plan. For more information about the state vaccination plan visit:

<https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/vaccination-plan>

The first supply of COVID-19 vaccine receiving Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) began being distributed in the U.S. on December 14, 2020. During the initial period, referred to as Phase 1a, supplies of the vaccine are limited, and therefore allocated to health care personnel and long-term care (LTC) residents and staff. As more vaccine becomes available additional populations will be eligible to receive it. The next phase is 1b. To view the categories of critical populations for vaccine allocation please refer to the attached chart. Eventually, everyone who wishes to have the COVID-19 vaccine will have an opportunity to receive it.

How will you know when it is your turn to receive the COVID-19 vaccine? As ICPHD moves through the phases set by the State of Illinois and vaccine become available to members of the general public ICPHD will communicate availability, along with where and how to receive the vaccine, via traditional and social media outlets as well as on the ICPHD website:

<http://www.co.iroquois.il.us/health-department/>

It is important to remember that while we work to make the vaccine available to all members of our community the best way to reduce the spread of COVID-19 is wearing masks, social distancing, proper hand washing and monitoring yourself for symptoms.