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WNY COVID Working Group Statement on Vaccinations January 11, 2021

Key points:

- Widespread vaccine use is a critical step in controlling the pandemic and protecting the community's health.
- The Working Group recommends widespread use of vaccines against COVID-19. Healthcare providers should encourage their patients to get vaccinated when it is available.
- The Working Group encourages all healthcare providers and their staff to receive the vaccine themselves to demonstrate their support.
- Data indicate that the vaccines are very effective in preventing symptomatic COVID-19, with side effect profiles similar to other vaccines.
- The known and potential benefits and risks of the vaccine strongly favor its use, in the context of the known severe COVID-19 risks.
- The Working Group supports equitable distribution of vaccines. When vaccine supply is limited, priority should be given to essential employees and those at high risk of severe manifestations of COVID-19. It is important to ensure equitable access for disproportionately affected groups, including people of color.
- Vaccines should be offered only in the order of priority directed by New York State.
- All people should continue to wear masks, practice social distancing, and avoid groups, even after vaccination. Even though the vaccine prevents symptomatic illness, it may still be possible to carry and transmit the virus after vaccination.

(continued)

References:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, December 22). Ensuring the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in the United States.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety.html>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, November 2). Making a Strong Recommendation for COVID-19 Vaccination.

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/hcp/engaging-patients.html>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, January 5). Benefits of Getting a COVID-19 vaccine. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/vaccine-benefits.html>

Signed:

Gale Burstein, MD, MPH
Erie County Department of Health

Richard A. Carlson, Jr., MD
Primary Care IPA

Richard Charles, MD
General Physician, PC

Joe Chow, MD
Immediate Care

Tyler Connine, MD
UB Emergency Medicine
Residency

Tanvir Dara, MD
WellNow Urgent Care

Kathleen Dyson, MD
Community Pediatric Associates of WNY

Aimana ElBahtity, Esq.
Medical Society of Erie County

John Fudyma, MD, MPH
Latus Medical Care

Ken Garbarino, MD
Family Choice of New York

Kevin Gibbons, MD
UBMD

Kathleen Grisanti, MD
Pediatric and Adolescent Urgent Care of
WNY

Ed Heidelberger, MD, PhD
Bertrand Chaffee Hospital

Allana Krolkowski, MD
Jericho Road

Jeffrey Lackner, PsyD
UB Division of Behavioral Medicine

Charlene Ludlow, RN, MHA
Erie County Medical Center

James C. Matteliano, DDS
Eighth District Dental Society

Jason Matuszak, MD
Excelsior Orthopaedics

Mike Merrill, MD, MS, MBA
Independent Health

Katherine Mullin, MD
Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Jamie Nadler, MD
Kaleida Health

Margaret Paroski, MD, MMM
Catholic Medical Partners

Sucharita Paul, MD, MPH
UBMD Emergency Medicine

Mark F. Perry, MD
BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York

John Sellick, DO, MS
VA Western New York Healthcare System

Samuel Shatkin, MD
Aesthetic Associates Center

Kevin Shiley, MD
Catholic Health

Stephen Turkovich, MD
Oishei Children's Hospital

Willie Underwood, MD, MSc, MPH
Buffalo Center for Health Equity

Raul Vazquez, MD
Urban Family Practice

Rick Vienne, DO
Univera Healthcare

Joyce Zmuda, MD
Optimum Physician Alliance

The ILI/COVID Working Group of Western New York was formed in response to local variation in approach to the diagnosis and treatment of Influenza-Like-Illness and COVID-19 in the region. It is a collaborative effort of hospital systems, academic departments, independent practice associations, and insurers. The logos and signatures on this document represent the organizations' support of this statement.

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