Frontline News

1199 MEMBERS ON THE FRONT LINES OF THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

EVERYONE 12 YEARS AND OLDER CAN NOW GET THE VACCINE

President Biden's Center for Disease Control announced recently that everyone 12 years and older is now eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. This is great news for families with children and will help keep loved ones safe as we begin to spend more time with friends and family.

The Administration has cleared the way for children to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, which has been tested on children and proven to be both safe and effective. The Moderna and Johnson & Johson vaccines are currently be evaluated for children and it is expected the federal government will also clear them for use with kids. But for now, children can only receive the Pfizer vaccine. For children to receive the vaccine, a parent or guardian is required to provide consent and an adult caregiver should accompany the minor to their vaccination appointment.

NEW STUDY CAN HELP BUILD TRUST AMONG CNAs ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINE

Certified Nurse Aides (CNA) working in nursing homes experienced some of the most difficult conditions among frontline caregivers during the pandemic. They cared for countless residents who got sick and many who died; they got sick themselves, and many watched as their families also contracted COVID-19. A new study includes interviews with both vaccinated and undecided CNAs and sheds new light on how we should approach our co-workers who are still making up their mind about getting the vaccine. Many CNAs expressed concerns about taking the COVID-19 vaccine for a variety of reasons that continue to make workers and residents vulnerable to the disease. You can read the study here: https://bit.ly/3pfWFOv. Much of the new research revolves around what employers can do to increase vaccination rates and we can use it to push our employers to do the right things. Here are some examples:

- **Establish trust.** Building trust in the vaccine means building employees' trust. We should insist that employers communicate transparently and frequently about the vaccine, organizational policies about vaccination and vaccination rates within your facility.
- **Remove barriers.** Make it easy for staff to find and access vaccines and consider requesting employers host vaccine drives so that employees can access them where they already are.
- **Acknowledge CNAs expertise.** CNAs want to choose what's best for them and their families, and because they work in health care, they have expertise. We should use our expertise to work with employers and help them understand the vaccine choices our coworkers are making.
- **Offer meaningful incentives** like paid time off to get vaccinated or recover from short-term side effects.
- **Respect people's process.** There are still many nursing home workers who are deciding whether or not they will get vaccinated. We need to have thoughtful and effective conversations with them to help them make the right choice to protect themselves, their families, and our co-workers and residents. And sometimes we need to help our employers do a better job as well, but we can do it.

TIPS TO HELP EASE KIDS' VACCINATION FEARS

- Be honest with your child. Explain the shots can pinch or sting, but it won't hurt for long.
- Engage other family members, especially older siblings, to support your child.
- Avoid telling scary stories or making threats about the shots.
- Remind your child that vaccines can keep him or her healthy.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q: *What if I have children who cannot yet get vaccinated?*

A: Some pediatricians are suggesting that parents of children under 12, who cannot get vaccinated yet, continue to follow guidance from earlier in the pandemic. One chief medical officer from a major health-care institution noted that gatherings of children should be small and outdoors. "If I had kids under 12, I would want them to wear a mask in school," they said. "Wear a mask when we're in a public space with a lot of people. And indoors, for sure I would have the mask."