



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Columbia County Public Health partners with local providers to finish vaccinating Phase 1a groups; calls for all remaining 1a groups to connect with public health

(Columbia County, OR) - Columbia County Public Health recently announced a new partnership with OHSU Family Medicine at Scappoose to finish vaccinating Phase 1a groups. OHSU joins Scappoose Rural Fire District and Columbia Health Services as the third local provider to receive COVID-19 vaccine to administer shots to specific Phase 1a groups.

Earlier in the month, Scappoose Rural Fire District received enough doses to vaccinate EMS staff and other first responders in Columbia County. Columbia Health Services subsequently received doses for its own staff, other local health care providers, and individuals in congregate care settings.

“The State of Oregon’s plan is to move to vaccinating educators on January 25, but counties must attest that Phase 1a groups have been vaccinated first,” Commissioner Margaret Magruder said. “It’s important that those individuals in Phase 1a who have not received information about how to register for a vaccine work with our Public health Department to help ensure we’ve reached everyone.”

This week, OHSU Family Medicine at Scappoose will receive doses from the county’s allocation to vaccinate home health care workers, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their caretakers, and additional specified groups. The clinic plans to open over the weekend so their staff can efficiently administer all the doses in two days.

“The additional doses OHSU is receiving this week narrows the gap of individuals in Phase 1a who live or work in Columbia County, and have not yet had the opportunity to be vaccinated,” Columbia County Public Health executive director, Michael Paul, said.

Any individuals in a Phase 1a group, or any employer with staff in a Phase 1a group, who have not yet been contacted or linked to a provider for a vaccination appointment, should contact Columbia County Public Health at 503-397-7247.

The addition of another clinic in the county makes appointments more accessible to certain Phase 1a groups who may encounter barriers to attending large vaccination events planned in urban areas. To date, most vaccinations in the state have been administered in hospitals, urgent care clinics, congregate care centers, EMS locations or in local public health clinics.

“We are grateful to OHSU-Scappoose, Scappoose Fire District and Columbia Health Services for assisting with these Phase 1a groups and we hope they serve as a model to other Rural Health Providers,” Paul said. “They are breaking down the number of hurdles people need to jump over to get a vaccination, and we hope their success leads to additional clinics offering vaccinations at convenient times and locations. We’ve already received comments from some of our residents; they want to get vaccinated in a familiar setting with providers they know and trust.”

Although there are strong plans to vaccinate people in our region quickly as supply increases, Paul said residents are reminded to take simple steps to protect themselves, their family, and the community. Continue to maintain physical distancing, wear face coverings where physical distancing cannot be maintained, and follow good hand hygiene.

Information for subsequent vaccination groups will be posted on the Columbia County Public Health website as soon as registration becomes available. To see if you fall into the Phase 1a category, visit this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/phase1abreakdown>

General questions about COVID-19 can be answered by calling 2-1-1. Questions about your specific medical needs should be directed to your health care provider. If you cannot find the information you need via the websites and number provided here, call Columbia County Public Health at 503-397-7247.