



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 8, 2020

MEDIA CONTACT:

Jen Daly

Gray Media

860.398.3916

daly@graymediagroup.com

**‘Let’s Get Immunized NY’ launches campaign to promote accessibility
and science-based information and policy on vaccinations**

(Albany, N.Y.) A diverse group of organizations from across the state have come together to promote science and evidence-based information and policy related to the importance and safety of vaccines for all New Yorkers.

The new campaign, with over 30 members includes organizations from a variety of sectors, including social justice organizations, educational and parent-focused groups, business advocates, agriculture and health care provider and public health organizations.

The NYS Academy of Family Physicians is spearheading the campaign with the support of many other partners across various sectors with a shared mission of keeping our communities healthy.

“The preventive value of vaccines is critically needed now to protect the health and safety of everyone,” said Dr. Jason Matuszak, NYSAFP president. “And while we all wait for news of COVID-19 vaccines, it remains critical that New Yorkers young and old are fully vaccinated against all preventable diseases—so Let’s Get Immunized New York!”

Across the country and in New York, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated existing racial disparities in the American health care system.

“In communities of color barriers to preventative care such as immunizations is a long-standing issue,” said Lorraine Braithwaite-Harte, Health Chairman for NAACP New York State Conference. “That is why as part of our overall health initiative we are pleased to team up with the expansive number of members of this campaign to work to bring health equity as well as trust and understanding of vaccinations to residents across New York.”

In addition to lower vaccination rates among Black, Latino and other minority populations, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a dramatic drop in overall vaccination rates, as fear of exposure to the COVID virus and related restrictions on work and travel have caused cancellation or postponement of well visits.

“Ensuring that you and your family are up to date with all available vaccines is one of the safest and most effective ways you can protect your loved ones and your community. If we have learned anything from this pandemic, it’s how an unchecked illness can spread across the entire globe. We all play a part in preventing that from happening. If you’re eligible for a vaccine, please get vaccinated. If your children are eligible, please get them vaccinated. It’s never been more clear that everything is at risk when we don’t play our part,” said Kevin D. Watkins, MD, MPH, NYSACHO President.

Vaccines have long been considered among the most important advances in public health and play a strong role in keeping our communities safe and society functioning normally. Widespread use of vaccines has severely reduced the threat of serious contagious diseases including smallpox, polio, measles, whooping cough, meningococcal disease, mumps and hepatitis B.

"As parents and families, we recognize the importance of well care for children and youth," offered Kyle Belokopitsky, NYS PTA Executive Director. "Unfortunately we

have seen routine child health and wellness care fall to the wayside these past months. We strongly encourage all families to maintain their child's well visits and to bring any medical concerns to their health care provider. We will continue to support New York's families and children and help ensure families have timely access to health related information, comprehensive health insurance for every child, as well as regular, healthy and nutritious meals, all critical to maintaining their health and wellbeing, especially during these times."

"Clearly public health has an impact on the fiscal health of companies and businesses across New York," said Lev Ginsburg, Senior Director of Government Affairs for the Business Council of the State of New York. "For our members, ensuring timely access to vaccines—both those that are now available and those on the way-- is how they will keep their employees and their families healthy and get their business back to work in the state."

"The COVID pandemic presented many challenges for our farms, but none were taken more seriously than the protection of our employees," said David Fisher, New York Farm Bureau President. "While there were isolated COVID outbreaks on farms, it is as important as ever to do all that we can to keep farmworkers safe for their own well-being and that of the food supply chain. Our farmers want to ensure that their staff members are up to date on required vaccines and as front-line workers are among the first to be vaccinated when an approved COVID vaccine is available."

Let's Get Immunized NY will provide current, reliable and trustworthy information on immunizations and encourage all New Yorkers to be up to date on all recommended vaccinations. Campaign partners are calling on New Yorkers to make a year-end resolution to get caught up with all recommended vaccines as part of a collective pledge for a Healthy 2021. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

###