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# MEMORANDUM

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Date: January 12, 2023

To: The Honorable Chair and Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Lesher   
County Administrator

Re: **Bivalent Booster Outreach to Seniors**

Individual Board Members have expressed an interest in vaccination and booster efforts among vulnerable older adults. Attached please find a COVID-19 recommendation from Dr. Terry Cullen that summarizes the notable progress to date in serving this population and also lays out the upcoming events for that age group.

JKL/dym

Attachment

c: Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator  
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer  
Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator  
Terry Cullen, MD, MS, Public Health Director, Health Department

To: Jan Leshner, County Administrator  
  
Francisco Garcia, MD, MPH  
Deputy County Administrator

Date: January 12, 2023

From: Theresa Cullen, MD, MS   
Health Department Director

**Re: Bivalent Booster Outreach to Seniors**

**Introduction**

"The updated (bivalent) boosters are called 'bivalent' because they protect against both the original virus that causes COVID-19 and the Omicron variant BA.4 and BA.5" ([source](#)). In a study released December 16, 2022, the bivalent booster provided 73% additional protection against hospitalization for COVID-19 among immunocompromised adults aged 65 and over ([source](#)). Adults who are 65 and older are at the highest risk of becoming severely ill with COVID-19 ([source](#)). A significant percentage of this demographic is also eligible for the COVID bivalent booster but has not yet received it. At the time of this memo, just under 50% of those that are 65+ have an updated bivalent booster. Therefore, the Pima County Health Department (PCHD) has engaged in a targeted response to provide COVID bivalent boosters to the 65+ community of Pima County.

**Discussion**

To serve the 65+ community in Pima County the Vaccine Equity team continues to reach out to a list of 428 licensed assisted living facilities (pulled from AZDHS) which includes small to large facilities serving anywhere from 2 to 232 community members. COVID home self-tests are also being distributed at these events to help individuals determine if they are infectious and isolate from others accordingly. These efforts have resulted in the following outreach:

In November, Vaccine Equity hosted 3 events serving the 65+ community – Aspen Care Homes, Via Elegante Assisted Living Facility (Tucson Mountains and Foothills) in which 83 COVID-19 vaccines were administered (of which 2 were first doses).

In December, Vaccine Equity conducted 5 outreaches serving the 65+ community (including the ones in Green Valley). 104 community members were vaccinated for COVID-19 (which included 1 first dose and 2 second doses) and 19 for flu.

**Future events confirmed as of 1/10/23:**

- Tucson House (1/20/2023; 3/17/2023)
- Heavenly Haven Assisted Living (2/27/2023)
- American Legion Post 68 (4/4/2023; 7/11/2023)

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- The Villas at Green Valley (2/1/2023)
- Angela's Assisted Living (2/21/2023)

**Other events in progress that will be scheduled include:**

- Countryside Community Center
- Our Lady of the Valley church
- 29th Annual Greater Green Valley Health Fair

In addition to the Vaccine Equity team, there has been an ongoing effort from the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) program to provide ongoing guidance about vaccination as well as outbreak support to Long-Term Care facilities (LTCs). This information is provided through biweekly conference calls as well as email communication. Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS) provides contractors to vaccinate and test for COVID-19 at LTCs. The PHEP and Epidemiology teams have worked together to regularly contact LTCs and register facilities with AZDHS for vaccine and booster clinics. These services are free to the LTCs and residents.

Additionally, since March 2021, Pima County has provided COVID-19 vaccines and boosters to individuals that are homebound. With over 3000 registrations, this program primarily serves those that are over 65 and high-risk individuals.

We will continue to inform County Administration as additional targeted clinics are scheduled in other parts of the County.