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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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COVID-19 Update: Recent Surge Showing Signs of Slowing *With Very Rare Exceptions, EVERYONE 12 and Older Should Get Vaccinated*

Lake County, CA (September 10, 2021) – Statewide and locally, the recent surge in COVID-19 cases is showing signs of slowing. This is encouraging, but the virus remains widespread in Lake County. Settings that bring together people from numerous households carry risk. Onsite learning resuming at local schools has certainly led to an increase in circulation of the virus. Last weekend’s County Fair may likewise lead to some uptick in cases in the coming weeks.

79 Lake County residents have now died due to COVID-related illness; 16 since July 1. We all must take the virus seriously, and protect those that are medically vulnerable or ineligible for vaccination.

The Road Ahead: Long-Range Outlook

We are now at least 18 months into this pandemic, and we are all wondering when it will be over. Experts have a wide variety of opinions; so many unpredictable developments have occurred that we can’t know for sure.

As of this writing, it appears vaccinated people run a small risk of being hospitalized or dying from the COVID variants currently present. Getting vaccinated *and* taking precautions—masking around others, avoiding crowded indoor settings, being cautious in outdoor settings—can allow vaccinated folks to resume most normal activities.

Unvaccinated people are at significantly greater risk of severe infection. The vast majority of people that have recently been hospitalized or died due to COVID-19 have been unvaccinated. People that take good care of themselves (e.g., eat healthy, exercise, take vitamins, and maintain a healthy body weight) may be less likely to experience severe illness. However, vaccination provides considerable protection, even for healthy people.

Our current surge will end, but there will very likely be another once cold and flu season sets in. Please prepare yourselves and your families by getting the vaccine, using masks, and getting tested if you have symptoms. Unless you are seriously ill, please do not use local emergency rooms for COVID testing. Alternative resources are available:
<http://health.co.lake.ca.us/Coronavirus/Testing.htm>

What Can Increased Vaccination Do for Lake County Residents?

Vaccination is the most significant thing we can do in coming weeks to make Lake County safer. We can keep our kids in school, keep businesses open, and keep our hospitals from getting overwhelmed.

Vaccination is Free and Widely Available in Lake County

Thanks to the support of the Board of Supervisors, we have an OPTUM Mobile Vaccination Van for the next two months. They can administer up to 100 doses per day. Walk-ins are welcome, and Spanish-speakers are available. Vaccination through OPTUM is now available in Nice, Clearlake, Lakeport, Lower Lake and Middletown. The OPTUM Mobile Van schedule and other opportunities for vaccination are listed here: <http://health.co.lake.ca.us/Coronavirus/Vaccines.htm>

If you are unable to get to any vaccination site, or experiencing other barriers, contact us at 707-263-8174.

Get Vaccinated at Sunday's (9/12) "Dia de la Independencia" Event in Kelseyville, from 2-7pm

We truly want to make it easy for people to get vaccinated. With the help of community partners, we are present at community events. Many will have seen OPTUM staff set up outside of the main gate at the Lake County Fair.

This Sunday, 9/12, with the invaluable partnership of Lake County Tribal Health Consortium, we will have a booth at the Dia de la Independencia event in Kelseyville. COVID-19 vaccination will be available from 2-7pm. No appointment necessary!

Community members continue to step up to get vaccinated. With the help of Sutter Sonoma and the Latino Alliance/We Care, 38 people were vaccinated during a recent event at Kelseyville Apartments.

COVID-19 Vaccination is the Right Choice for Almost EVERYONE that is Eligible

With very rare exceptions, everyone 12 years and older should get vaccinated. Public Health is focusing our efforts on certain groups in order to save lives and keep the community functioning.

- **Vaccination Makes Schools Safer:** We continue to try to work to set up vaccine clinics in each School District. Getting eligible school-age kids, their parents, and education staff vaccinated will help the schools stay open. Watch your District's social media channels for the next opportunity.
- **Vaccination Makes Healthcare Facilities Safer, and It's Required by September 30 in CA:** We are working to help local healthcare institutions meet State Public Health Officer Aragón's mandate that, "All workers who provide services or work in facilities described in subdivision (a) have their first dose of a one-dose regimen or their second dose of a two-dose regimen by September 30, 2021."
- **Vaccination Protects Our Elders and Immunocompromised Residents:** 1/3 of people over 65 in Lake County are still not fully vaccinated. Getting the immune compromised and elder population will help the hospitals from getting overwhelmed.

If you haven't already, please get vaccinated in the next two weeks. We have the ability to give the shots now, and it will help us be more prepared when the next surge comes. Please also help us get the message out, particularly while the OPTUM Mobile Vaccination Van is available. Again, Lake County-focused vaccination resources are available here:

<http://health.co.lake.ca.us/Coronavirus/Vaccines.htm>

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