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Gov. Wolf Visits See-Right Pharmacy to Discuss COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Efforts

Harrisburg, PA – Governor Tom Wolf today visited See-Right Pharmacy in Harrisburg to learn more about how the local, neighborhood pharmacy is vaccinating community members and to talk about COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy in Pennsylvania.

“Local, community vaccine providers are essential partners in an equitable vaccine distribution,” Gov. Wolf said. “With existing ties to patients, providers like See-Right Pharmacy as well as grassroots and nonprofit organizations that are embedded in their local communities are critical to ensuring that Pennsylvanians in every neighborhood have access to the vaccine and because equitable vaccine distribution is the only way for all of our communities to be protected against COVID-19.”

The governor was joined by See-Right Pharmacy pharmacist, Dr. Alex Quaddoumi, R.Ph. Pennsylvania’s Office of Advocacy and Reform executive director Daniel Jurman and the Department of Health’s Office of Health Equity director David Saunders.

See-Right Pharmacy on North 6th Street has administered more than 2,000 doses of the Moderna vaccine since January 27. Located in a historically underserved neighborhood, 80 percent of the pharmacy’s patients are from racial and ethnic minority populations.

As Pennsylvania continues to accelerate vaccination efforts, it remains dedicated to ensuring an equitable vaccine distribution. The CDC has found long-standing systemic health and social inequalities have put many people from minority groups at an increased risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19. The Administration has worked throughout the pandemic to address these disparities within marginalized populations.

On March 12, Pennsylvania’s Joint COVID-10 Vaccine Task Force announced the formation of subcommittees focused on key issues and audiences, bringing more voices to the table to aid in representing all Pennsylvanians. The Racial Equity subcommittee was tasked with helping to message current vaccine efforts to advocates and stakeholders, lift issues for the consideration of the administration and the legislature, and provide more public input into the current vaccine rollout process.

The Racial Equity subcommittee unites more than 100 members representing community and state government stakeholders focusing on removing barriers of equitable vaccine distribution across the commonwealth. While health inequities have been amongst marginalized populations for decades, the subcommittee is focused on creating and strengthening strategies around vaccinations for different ethnic and racial minorities, elderly shut-ins, those struggling with poverty, and people with intellectual disabilities, as well as vaccine hesitancy among ethnic and generational groups and funding needs to better leverage community-based organizations to help solve these issues.

Hesitancy, much like systemic inequalities, is a barrier that is not new, but the recent announcement of the CDC/FDA pause on the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine could exacerbate existing concerns further confirming the need for localized, trusted vaccine providers.

“The COVID-19 vaccines have similar efficacy rates to that of the polio and measles vaccines,” said See-Right Pharmacy owner Dr. Darrin Silbaugh, R.Ph. “Polio and Measles are all but eradicated because of vaccines. The first step in eliminating COVID-19 is to get vaccinated.”

Find a map of vaccine providers [here](#).

More information on See-Right Pharmacy vaccinations can be found [here](#).

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