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Governor Kate Brown Provides Updates on COVID-19 in Oregon

January 15, 2021

OHA has reached goal of 12,000 vaccinations per day, Governor demands answers from federal government on news that vaccine reserve does not exist

Salem, OR—Governor Kate Brown held a press conference today to update Oregonians on the status of COVID-19 vaccinations in Oregon. The Governor was joined by Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Director Patrick Allen, Adjutant General Michael Stencel, and Legacy Health Chief Operating Officer Trent Green.

"Last week, I directed OHA to speed up our efforts and reach the benchmark of 12,000 vaccinations administered per day," said Governor Brown. "On January 8, we hit that mark, and today Oregon added more than 26,000 vaccines administered to our registry. OHA has been working with health care providers, hospitals, pharmacies, local public health partners, and our National Guard to streamline the distribution process and vaccinate Oregonians more quickly.

"To further expedite vaccinations, just a few days ago we heard from U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar that the federal government would be releasing its

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entire supply of COVID-19 vaccines to states. With this news, we announced plans (https://www.oregon.gov/newsroom/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?newsid=54021) to begin administering vaccines to Oregonians 65 and older, as well as educators and child care providers, beginning January 23. But yesterday we received the disturbing news that this federal reserve of vaccines does not actually exist.

"Let me assure you that Oregon's priorities, and my priorities, have not changed. I remain committed to vaccinating our seniors quickly. But this latest news will unfortunately cause a two-week delay in beginning vaccinations for seniors. Additionally, being supplied less vaccines than promised forces difficult choices. Beginning on February 8, we will start vaccinating our most vulnerable seniors, those age 80 years and older. Our experience shows that this group has among the highest mortality rates.

"And, because one of my main priorities is getting our kids back to in-person instruction and protecting our educational staff to help achieve this goal, starting the week of January 25 we will begin vaccinations of our educators and school staff. In some counties, this may even start sooner."

A copy of the Governor's prepared remarks from today's press conference is available here (https://drive.google.com/file/d/187Y1n7h5Q4bLBD3O3cjc9yDLi88npryi/view) .

A recording of today's live-streamed press conference is available here (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3YRFvO7DFP8&feature=youtu.be) .

An HD recording of today's press conference for members of the media is available here (https://vimeo.com/501051247) . Please note, the video starts at the 32:08 mark.

More information on vaccines is available at covidvaccine.oregon.gov (https://covidvaccine.oregon.gov/) .

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