Governor Abbott Announces Outreach Partnership To Increase COVID-19 Vaccinations Among Seniors

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Governor Greg Abbott today announced a new outreach partnership between the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and several partners to enhance the state's Save Our Seniors program. The partnership includes the Texas Employee Retirement System, the Texas Teachers Retirement System, AARP, and Medicare health plans. Participating Medicare health plans include UnitedHealthcare, Humana, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas.

HHSC will work with these partners to launch a direct outreach effort through email, phone calls, and direct mail to encourage seniors to get vaccinated against COVID-19 and to provide them with the tools and information they need receive a vaccine. This outreach partnership will reach approximately two million seniors. The Governor announced the new outreach partnership at a press conference in McAllen, one of the many communities participating in the Save Our Seniors program this week.

"With the continued success of the Save Our Seniors program, we are protecting more seniors in Texas from COVID-19," said Governor Abbott. "This new outreach partnership will strengthen this program by helping us reach more seniors across

the state and ensuring they have the tools and information they need to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Thank you to our partners for stepping up to protect seniors across our state. With more vaccines on the way and more Texans eligible, we will continue to make tremendous progress to ensure that every Texan who wants a vaccine will get one."

Through the Save Our Seniors program, the Texas Division of Emergency Management and the Texas Military Department work alongside local jurisdictions to set up a central drive-through vaccine clinic in each community or administer directly to homebound seniors. The program was announced in February. Since the program's launch, 90 counties have participated or are actively participating and nearly 24,000 Texans have been vaccinated through the initiative. The program has also steadily increased the number of doses allocated to the program. This week, 24,000 doses were allocated — the largest number yet.

Previously, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) announced that COVID-19 vaccinations will be open to all Texans beginning March 29th. Additionally, DSHS has directed vaccine providers to prioritize people 80 years old or older when scheduling appointments and accommodate anyone in that age group who presents for vaccination, whether or not they have an appointment, by immediately moving them to the front of the line. That will ensure vaccination of anyone 80 or older with as small a burden on themselves as possible. Texans can call 2-1-1 to find out more information about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

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