

The Shot Matters

By the Office for Equity and Inclusion Advisory Board

The Office for Equity and Inclusion Advisory Board is made up of community members appointed to promote and advance the County's efforts towards equity and inclusion throughout the County. At its March 2021 meeting, the Board expressed desire to promote the COVID-19 vaccination. The article that appears below is our effort to inform Dane County residents and promote the vaccination.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused approximately 375,000 deaths in the United States during 2020. The age-adjusted death rate increased by 15.9% in 2020. Overall death rates were highest among non-Hispanic Black persons and non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native persons. COVID-19 was the third leading cause of death, and the COVID-19 death rate was highest among Hispanics.

According to data from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, on April 26, 2021, more than 42% of the US population has gotten at least one Covid-19 vaccine dose. Roughly 28.5% of the population is fully vaccinated. According to the Department of Health & Human Services, more than 43,000 Americans are hospitalized with the virus. **The two paragraphs above will be updated closer to the release date of the article – get info at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/disparities.htm>**

How are we doing in Dane County?

The paragraph below will be updated closer to the release date of the article get info <https://publichealthmdc.com/coronavirus>

In Dane County 43,802 people are infected with COVID-19; 35 people were hospitalized on April 26, 2021; and 295 have died. A third of Dane County residents have completed their vaccine series. 33.4% of residents have completed their vaccine series and 50.7% of residents have at least one dose of vaccine. 62% of eligible Dane County residents (those who are age 16+) have received at least one dose of vaccine. 91.4% of Dane County residents age 65+ have received at least one dose of vaccine, which is the second highest among Wisconsin counties. More than 4 out of every 5 of those 65+ have completed their series.

Dane County has issued several orders including but not limited to 1) a timetable for vaccinating Dane County Educators; 2) adjusting some face covering and distancing requirements for people who are fully vaccinated; 3) providing Equitable Access to the COVID-19 Vaccine; 4) providing information on where to get tested. These orders have been issued to stop the spread of the virus, protect all residents from exposure to the virus, and help return to normalcy. 5) Dane County aggressively pursued a partnership with the State of Wisconsin and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) establish the Alliant Center as Wisconsin's third federal COVID-19 vaccination site. 6) Dane County Emergency Management has worked diligently to get as many vaccines as possible for this community in the quickest time frame. 7) The Alliant Center has been re-framed to accommodate testing for walk-up, bike-up, and drive thru.

If You have Been Fully Vaccinated, You Can:

Visit inside a home or private setting without a mask with other fully vaccinated people of any age.

Visit inside a home or private setting without a mask with one household of unvaccinated people who are not at risk for severe illness.

Travel domestically without a pre- or post-travel test

Travel domestically without quarantining after travel

Travel internationally without a pre-travel test depending on destination

Travel internationally without quarantining after travel

Why We Cannot Wait

The Medical Establishment has a long history of mistreating Black Americans — from gruesome experiments on enslaved people to the forced sterilizations of Black women and the infamous Tuskegee syphilis study that withheld treatment from hundreds of Black men for decades to let doctors track the course of the disease. So, it is not surprising that just 42 percent of Black Americans said in November 2020 they would be willing to take a COVID-19 vaccine. Recognizing this flaw in the quest to increase access to the vaccine and reach communities of color.

Black Americans are more likely to die from COVID-19, reflecting longstanding disparities in health and inequalities in access to medical care. By early April in Illinois, for example, black people made up about 30% of cases and about 40% of coronavirus-related deaths, according to statistics provided by the state's public health agency, African Americans make up just 14.6% of the state's population

"We should not allow the dissemination of a lifesaving vaccine to worsen health inequities. In fact, it should help to narrow them," said Dr. Reed Tuckson, co-founder of the Black Coalition Against Covid, and a former health commissioner of Washington, D.C.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) announced a \$6.1 million investment to support community-based organizations in raising awareness and access to COVID-19 vaccine among communities that have faced both historical and current barriers to health care services and the COVID-19 vaccine. These community outreach grants have been awarded to several Dane County organizations with strong historical ties to communities of color. It is our expectation that these organizations will break through the long-held distrust between communities of color and the medical establishment, reaching those neighborhoods where the greatest disparity exists.



*Greg Jones, NAACP President and Chair
OEI Advisory Board receiving 2nd shot*



"In light of over 570,000 people losing their lives to COVID 19, I believe that it is imperative that people of color seize this opportunity to protect themselves, their friends and family by taking the shot. In the past, we have not trusted the government because of past treatment of black persons through research. This is not the time to dwell in the past. This is the time to trust the science, trust the information and make an informed decision to get the shot. If you are going to gamble, gamble on the probability that the shot will save you as opposed to the probability of you avoiding contracting COVID without it. The ball is in your court, it's a matter of life and death. I have some health challenges, and I decided to take the shot and protect my 16 grandchildren and 9 great-grands." Rev. Joseph Baring

What

must we do?

1. Inform the community that we are in a race against time to stop the virus from mutating.
2. Inform the community that it is rare to have a serious reaction from the vaccine.
3. Inform the community that COVID-19 vaccines are among the most effective in the history of medicine.
4. Communicate that getting vaccinated is your best hope to return to those moments we all miss so much.
5. We must narrow the health disparities in Dane County leading to increased access and positive treatment outcomes for communities of color.
6. Encourage residents to get fully vaccinated.

