CONTACTS:
Anthony Albright, Communication Manager
Adventist Health St. Helena
707-967-7518 | albrigas@ah.org

Janet Upton, Public Information Officer
Napa County
707-666-5749 |janet.upton@countyofnapa.org

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Vaccine Supply Shortages Prompts Coordinated Strategy for Prioritizing Second Doses

Napa County CA – Napa County Public Health, in conjunction with St. Helena Hospital Foundation/Adventist Health St. Helena, is coordinating efforts to help ensure that COVID-19 second dose vaccines are prioritized to Phase 1a healthcare workers and those 75 and older who are part of Phase 1b-Tier 1.

To extend vaccine availability, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its COVID-19 vaccine guidance on January 21 to allow for second dose administration up to six weeks (42 days) after the first dose, if the second dose cannot be scheduled in the recommended timeframe. The CDC states that the data from clinical trials support this range. "Modest delays in the administration of the second dose, if absolutely necessary, would not be expected to decrease the protection conferred by the 2nd dose," according to the Federal Drug Administration (FDA).

Despite supply bottlenecks, Napa County and local health care partners have administered over 23,000 vaccines to those who live or work here. Currently, there are not enough doses for all those vaccinated to receive their second doses. Therefore, those who are not in Phase 1a or who are in Phase 1b, Tier 1 under the age of 75 may have their second dose delayed up to the 42 day time periods allowed by federal guidelines.

"It was only a few short weeks ago that counties were collectively working to vaccinate over 1 million people in just 10 days," said Napa County Public Health Officer Dr. Karen Relucio. "St. Helena Hospital and the Foundation really rose to the occasion in helping us establish the infrastructure to establish mass vaccination clinics. They continue to partner with us as we pivot yet again to prioritize now limited vaccine supplies from the state as we prepare for our second dose tsunami."

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“The St. Helena Hospital Foundation Mobile Health team is committed to ensuring everyone is receiving the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. We are honored to continue our partnership with Dr. Relucio and Napa County Public Health and provide these second doses as quickly as supply allows,” said Glen W. Newhart, president and CEO of the St. Helena Hospital Foundation

The St. Helena Hospital Foundation will provide notifications for all vaccinations administered at Napa Valley College Up Valley Extension by the St. Helena Mobile Health team. Those eligible for their second shot due next week will receive notifications via phone or email by Friday, February 5. Second doses will start at the Napa Valley College Up Valley Extension in St. Helena on Wednesday, February 10, by invitation only.

Those who received their first doses at the Napa Expo or Napa County Health and Human Services will be contacted by Napa County for their second dose appointments. For more information on vaccinations, visit https://www.countyofnapa.org/3096/COVID-19-Vaccines or call (707) 253-4540. In addition to signing up on the County’s vaccine interest form, people may also sign up on the State’s ‘MyTurn’ tool at https://myturn.ca.gov that is currently being beta tested and expected to roll out statewide in the coming weeks.

Given local efficiency at getting vaccines administered, the ability to react rapidly as additional doses become available is in place. In the meantime, the public is urged to continue exercising all safety precautions and get tested to help protect our community.

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