



## COMMISSION ON AGING

August 1, 2023

Dr. James Bridgers, Director  
Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services

Subject: 2023 Older Adults Vaccination Plan Inquiry

Dear Dr. James Bridgers,

I am writing on behalf of the Montgomery County Commission on Aging to ensure that older adults will have access to the necessary vaccines, supporting disease prevention and the maintenance of a healthy and active lifestyle. As an organization committed to being the voice and advocate for the benefit of seniors in the County, the Commission's Health and Wellness Committee would like the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to explain how it will implement their vaccination plan, including communication strategies through the PIO and other resources, this Fall 2023.

The Commission was authorized by the Older Americans Act, P.L. 116 131, and has been diligently serving Montgomery County since 1974. Our primary objective is to advise County government on the needs, interests, and issues of older adult residents while advocating on their behalf at the local, state, and national levels. The senior population, aged 60 years and older, constitutes 21 percent of the County's total population, and this number is projected to grow to 35 percent by 2040.

We would like to express our gratitude to the Department of Health and Human Services for your tireless efforts in response to the Covid-19 crisis from 2020 through 2023. We appreciate how older adults were prioritized in the early rounds of Covid-19 vaccinations. The availability of various options for receiving vaccines and getting notifications, such as pop-up clinics, public health centers, drug stores, mobile vans, recreation and senior centers, visiting nurses, public affairs announcements, and coordination with the County minority health programs, contributed significantly to the success of the vaccination campaign.

It is essential to recognize that unvaccinated seniors face significant risks of suffering from preventable diseases that can lead to severe illness and even death. Among the crucial vaccinations that should be accessible to them are the Covid-19 vaccine, Influenza (flu) vaccine, Pneumococcal (pneumonia) vaccine, Zoster (Shingles) vaccine, Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis (Tdap) vaccine, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus Infection (RSV) vaccine.

We understand that the DHHS budget allocates funds to support vaccinations, surveillance, and testing. As a Commission, we firmly believe in the importance of vaccinations for all Montgomery County

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residents, regardless of age. However, safeguarding the health and well-being of our vulnerable older adult residents is of utmost priority, and ensuring their access to the necessary vaccines is crucial.

We eagerly await your response and hope to gain valuable insights into the vaccination plan for older adults in Montgomery County.

Sincerely yours,  
*David Engel*  
David Engel, Chair  
Montgomery County Commission on Aging

cc: Sean O'Donnell  
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