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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Regional partnership mobilizes to assist vaccination process for older adults

In an effort to accomplish the daunting task of responding to thousands of older adults who have preregistered for the COVID-19 vaccine, the Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District (VA Department of Health), has partnered with Aging Together, the PATH Volunteer Hub, and Novant UVA Culpeper Medical Center to schedule vaccination appointments for residents of the PD9 region. With generous support from Culpeper Wellness Foundation, Aging Together was able to recruit and coordinate a corps of volunteers, primarily through its County Team members, to call and make appointments for those already on the Health Department's survey list. Specifically, they are calling those age 65 and older who filled out the regional health department's online "survey" prior to February 16, 2021.

This effort speeds up response to the high volume and is part of a mobilization partnership with Novant UVA Culpeper Medical Center who will be dispersing the vaccines at Germanna Community College in the coming weeks.

"And we especially understand the concern about scammers who target older adults by phone to fraudulently acquire personal information.", says Ellen Phipps, Executive Director at Aging Together who notes that volunteers and the Health Department will be using cell phones and private phone numbers. "We are very serious about protecting those who are called for these appointments." The volunteer call team has been trained by the Health Department with a script to identify themselves properly and all volunteers are required to sign a confidentiality statement. They will NOT be asking for any credit card, bank, or other payment information, nor will they ask for social security numbers. But they will be asking some screening questions that are fairly simple or that relate to direct information like street address. If there is any trepidation, people may contact the Health Department Hot Line Number at 540-308-6072 to verify. And Phipps reminds everyone, "There is NO COST to receive the COVID-19 vaccine!"

Currently over 1100 appointments per week are being scheduled by phone in response to the unprecedented demand for the vaccine. The partner team is currently working with those age 65 and older. Whitney Wright, Environmental Health Manager for the Rappahannock Rapidan Health District is currently managing the COVID-19 Vaccination Scheduling Team. "We are very thankful to our Partner Organizations that have stepped up to the plate to help schedule our seniors for COVID-19 vaccinations. Aging Together and PATH foundation have been

instrumental in helping our team reach those 65 and older to book their vaccination appointments. “

Any questions should be directed to the Health Department Hot Line at 540-308-6071.

The mission of aging together is, through partnerships, to connect people to communities and resources to improve quality of life as we age. Aging together serves the counties of Culpeper, Fauquier, Orange, Madison and Rappahannock.

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