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Iowa Health Care Association Foundation Launches New Statewide COVID-19 Vaccine Education Campaign for Long-term Care Workers

West Des Moines, Iowa – The Iowa Health Care Association (IHCA) Foundation has launched a new statewide COVID-19 vaccine education campaign this week. This campaign is the first of its kind in Iowa aimed at increasing vaccine adoption among the state’s long-term care workers, and it is made possible by a \$249,000 grant from the Iowa Department of Public Health’s COVID-19 Vaccine and Health Equity Grants Program.

“It was just one year ago when the COVID-19 vaccine was first introduced to long-term employees in Iowa through the Long-Term Care Pharmacy Program, and its adoption has steadily increased ever since thanks to the ongoing efforts of our long-term care providers to educate their staff about the vaccine. Today, over 78% of long-term care employees in Iowa are vaccinated,” said Lori Ristau, IHCA Foundation Executive Director.

“For those yet to be vaccinated the primary concerns have been about, first, the speed at which the vaccine was developed, and second, the potential impacts on fertility or the children of nursing mothers. This campaign addresses both of those concerns head-on. It features testimonials from long-term care workers who have grappled with those concerns personally and the research they did about the vaccine. Their stories are eye-opening and heart-warming, and a must-see for anyone grappling with this complicated decision.”

There are over 58,000 Iowans who work in long-term care and provide care to over 43,000 Iowans in nursing homes, assisted living facilities and at home through home health agencies. The long-term care workforce is comprised predominately of women ages 20-30, making it no surprise the top vaccine concerns cited by Iowa long-term care workers are about the speed of adoption and fertility implications.

The campaign, titled “Get the Facts About the Vax,” engages trusted peers to encourage fellow health care workers to learn more about vaccination from reputable medical resources. To ensure these testimonials reach the intended audience, videos of the testimonials will be deployed through a comprehensive digital advertising strategy and shared with all Iowa nursing facility, assisted living facility and home health agency providers. The videos will also be housed on a microsite that includes additional vaccination facts and resources.

“The need for ongoing vaccine education is incredibly important to retain and recruit staff to provide care,” added Ristau. “We are grateful for this grant from the Iowa Department of Public Health, which will enable us to help even more care providers protect their residents and staff.”

To learn more about the Get the Facts About the Vax campaign visit <https://getfactsaboutvax.com/>.

About the Iowa Health Care Association Foundation

Founded in 1988 by the Iowa Health Care Association (IHCA), the mission of the IHCA Foundation is to foster excellence in long-term care for Iowans by building a stronger workforce. The IHCA Foundation carries out this mission by empowering individuals to reach their career goals in the long-term care profession through scholarships, career education and career access programs. IHCA Foundation programs help support career opportunities in the long-term care continuum, including nursing facilities, assisted living programs, residential care facilities, senior living communities and home health agencies.

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