

## SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### FOR SUSTAINABLE HEALTHCARE QUALITY AND EQUITY WORK TO INCREASE COVID-19 VACCINATION RATES AMONG AT-RISK PATIENTS IN THE XXXXX COMMUNITY

*[Insert Organization Name] Works to Overcome Barriers and Better Protect Local Residents from Serious Dangers of COVID-19 with Information on Known COVID-19 Vaccination Benefits*

[Insert location and date] – [Insert organization name] today announced it will spearhead efforts to help people at high risk in the local community better understand the potentially life-saving benefits of the COVID-19 vaccine. As part of a new educational initiative with the Center for Sustainable Healthcare Quality and Equity (SHC), a wholly owned subsidiary of the National Minority Quality Forum, [Insert organization name] aims to help increase COVID-19 vaccination rates among their patients in XXXX, particularly older adults and those with chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and respiratory complications.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) emphasizes that despite the community benefit of the COVID-19 vaccine to fight against community spread and prevent illness in local areas, including hospitalization and even death, vaccination rates are well below national public health goals, especially among African American and Hispanic communities. For example, while vaccination rates are still climbing, African American and Hispanic communities have represented less than 2% of those vaccinated for COVID-19. [Insert relevant local facts and statistics, if available.]

“People over the age of 65 and with health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, HIV, COPD, and asthma are especially vulnerable to serious flu complications, including heart attack, stroke, pneumonia, hospitalization, nursing home admission and even death,” said [Insert organization’s medical spokesperson, if available]. For this reason, it is crucial to decrease the likelihood of community spread by receiving the COVID-19 vaccine, which can significantly help prevent bad outcomes.

#### Barriers to Vaccination among Underserved Populations

According to the CDC, people of color and underserved populations have much lower rates of the COVID-19 vaccination while facing higher risks of negative outcomes from the COVID-19, reflecting the barriers they face, including:

- Lack of access to regular health screenings
- Delayed treatment of serious chronic conditions (e.g., heart disease, diabetes)
- Lack of trust in health care messages from government and other institutions
- Misperceptions about the COVID-19 vaccine
- Health care providers not engaging patients in conversations about getting vaccinated or recommending protection against COVID-19

“COVID-19 vaccination is one of the most important tools that we have in closing the gap in health disparities in our community,” said [Insert organization leadership spokesperson]. “Yet, we know firsthand that many members of our community lack awareness about how serious COVID-19 can be for them, and what forms of protection, including vaccination, are available to best protect their health. We’re working to engage all members of our communities to promote trust and health care access, including COVID-19 vaccination.”

**OR**

“COVID-19 vaccination is one of the most important tools that we have for protecting the health of the most vulnerable members of our community,” said [Insert organization leadership spokesperson]. “Yet, we know firsthand there is a lack of awareness among these community members about how serious COVID-19 can be for them, and what forms of protection, including vaccination, are available to best protect their health. We’re working to build trust to overcome the concerns that have stopped people of color from getting their COVID-19 vaccination in the past. It’s vital to engage the community more.”

In partnership with SHC, [Insert organization] is teaming up with community leaders and trusted providers to better educate the community about the importance of COVID-19 vaccination and regular health screenings to help eliminate vaccination barriers among the underserved. By increasing COVID-19 vaccination rates in the local community, [Insert organization] aims to improve population health outcomes and overall wellness across the board.

## **About Vaccine Preventable Diseases**

In the last century, the availability and use of vaccines has dramatically improved the health and well-being of adults and children by protecting against infectious diseases that once commonly caused illnesses, some of which were fatal or severely debilitating. Adult vaccines, including flu immunization are known to prevent illness, decrease morbidity and mortality, and lower costs of care. And yet, flu immunization rates lag well below public health goals among the most vulnerable populations, including older adults, with growing racial and ethnic disparities.

## **About the Center for Sustainable Healthcare Quality and Equity (SHC)**

The Center for Sustainable Healthcare Quality and Equity (SHC) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the National Minority Quality Forum (NMQF) and is a pioneering health care information company that measures population health, provides actionable analysis to clinicians, health care systems, researchers, corporations and policy makers.

## Sample News Release

In 2016, a partnership was formed between SHC, Sanofi Pasteur, a leader in producing vaccines protecting against infectious diseases, and the QHC Advisory Group (QHC), dedicated to delivering cost effective and sustainable solutions to improving health care.

About [Insert Partner Organization Boilerplate Content – *NOTE: Please include social media handles to help increase awareness via release.*]

For more information on COVID-19 protection, please visit the CDC COVID-19 Resource Center.

Contact:

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