FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 7, 2022

CDC ENDORSES BOOSTER VACCINE FOR AGES 12 AND UP
Booster recommended five months after initial vaccine series

CUMBERLAND, MD – The CDC has adopted the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) recommendation to expand eligibility of COVID-19 vaccine booster doses to those 12 to 15 years old. CDC now recommends that adolescents age 12 and older should receive a booster shot 5 months after their initial Pfizer-BioNTech vaccination series. At this time, only the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is authorized and recommended for adolescents aged 12-17.

Data show that COVID-19 boosters help broaden and strengthen protection against Omicron and other SARS-CoV-2 variants. ACIP reviewed the available safety data following the administration of over 25 million vaccine doses in adolescents; COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective.

Allegany County continues to lag behind most of the state in COVID-19 vaccination rates. Currently, only 49.2% of Allegany County residents are fully vaccinated against COVID, compared to 70.9% of Marylanders.

UPCOMING VACCINE CLINICS:

January 12: Allegany County Fairgrounds, 11400 Moss Avenue, Cumberland, MD

- Moderna Booster Clinic (ages 18+) by appointment only.   Register online at https://www.marylandvax.org/appointment/en/reg/0921564101.
- First and second doses of Moderna (ages 18+), first and second doses of Pfizer (ages 12+), and booster doses of Pfizer (ages 12+) are available on a walk-in basis. No appointment is necessary.

For assistance registering for an appointment, county residents can call the COVID-19 call center at 240-650-3999. COVID-19 vaccines and boosters are also widely available in the community at local pharmacies, urgent care clinics, and some primary care providers.

The Allegany County Health Department also reported that there is currently a very high demand for testing at the free drive-thru clinic at the Allegany County Fairgrounds, with recent clinics seeing several hundred people. Periods of high demand can result in lengthy wait times, and individuals seeking testing should expect long lines. The testing clinic is open on Mondays from 2 to 7 p.m. and Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. *Please note that the health department does NOT offer COVID-19 testing at its Willowbrook Office Complex facilities.*

Allegany County COVID-19 case rate and positivity as of January 6:
- New COVID Cases (since December 29): 310 (cumulative total 12,641)
- Additional Deaths (since December 29): 2 (cumulative total 298)
- Cases Per 100,000 Population: 175.62 (Maryland: 208.33)
- Positivity Rate: 20.79% (Maryland: 28.3%)

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