October 28, 2020

The undersigned organizations endorse the following statement:

As seasons change, we make preparations to stay safe and adapt to the cooler weather. We check our smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. We make sure our cars are ready for winter driving. We bundle up before we leave the house.

According to the experts there is one additional step we should take: get our annual flu shots.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the flu has been a leading cause of death in Pennsylvania. The state Department of Health reported that, during the 2019–2020 flu season, nearly 130,000 Pennsylvanians contracted the flu, and more than 100 people tragically lost their lives due to complications from the flu.

And, since COVID-19 has drastically changed the way we are approaching flu season this year, health care providers across the Commonwealth are encouraging every eligible individual to get their flu shot.

When you get a flu shot, you are doing so much more than lowering your chances of getting sick; you also are protecting people who cannot get the flu shot due to age or other conditions. And this year, as we face the convergence of flu season and the COVID-19 pandemic, protecting yourself and helping our community becomes even more important. Getting a flu shot helps your health care team rule out the flu if you do get sick and need treatment, and can help them diagnose and treat you faster. Plus, by staying healthy during flu season, you are helping our hospitals, health care providers, and caregivers at the bedside, preserve limited hospital beds and health care resources.

Our nation’s infectious disease experts, health care providers, and researchers are doing incredible work to help us defeat COVID-19 once and for all. We trust their experience, knowledge, and guidance. We are committed to doing our part to keep our communities healthy by taking these simple steps to slow the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses like the flu:

• Continuing to wear masks
• Maintaining safe distances from others
• Washing our hands frequently
• Covering our coughs and sneezes
• Staying home when we are sick
• Getting a flu shot

The science shows us that these simple steps can help us stay healthy while protecting our loved ones, neighbors, and our health care providers. While we may come from a variety of organizations and industries, these are things we all can support.

Other organizations are encouraged to join the ongoing effort, which will continue to be promoted throughout the flu season.

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To support this effort, Lyft, the ride-sharing company, is offering ride credits for people traveling to get a flu shot. Pennsylvania can use the code PAFIGHTSFLU for rides to and from vaccination sites. Ride credits will be available until Dec. 31, 2020 and additional terms may apply.