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WNY COVID Working Group Statement on Vaccinations January 11, 2021

Key points:

- Widespread vaccine use is a critical step in controlling the pandemic and protecting the community's health.
- The Working Group recommends widespread use of vaccines against COVID-19. Healthcare providers should encourage their patients to get vaccinated when it is available.
- The Working Group encourages all healthcare providers and their staff to receive the vaccine themselves to demonstrate their support.
- Data indicate that the vaccines are very effective in preventing symptomatic COVID-19, with side effect profiles similar to other vaccines.
- The known and potential benefits and risks of the vaccine strongly favor its use, in the context of the known severe COVID-19 risks.
- The Working Group supports equitable distribution of vaccines. When vaccine supply is limited, priority should be given to essential employees and those at high risk of severe manifestations of COVID-19. It is important to ensure equitable access for disproportionately affected groups, including people of color.
- Vaccines should be offered only in the order of priority directed by New York State.
- All people should continue to wear masks, practice social distancing, and avoid groups, even after vaccination. Even though the vaccine prevents symptomatic illness, it may still be possible to carry and transmit the virus after vaccination.

(continued)

References:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, December 22). Ensuring the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in the United States.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety.html>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, November 2). Making a Strong Recommendation for COVID-19 Vaccination.

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/hcp/engaging-patients.html>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, January 5). Benefits of Getting a COVID-19 vaccine. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/vaccine-benefits.html>

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The ILI/COVID Working Group of Western New York was formed in response to local variation in approach to the diagnosis and treatment of Influenza-Like-Illness and COVID-19 in the region. It is a collaborative effort of hospital systems, academic departments, independent practice associations, and insurers. The logos and signatures on this document represent the organizations' support of this statement.

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