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## **GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT PARTNERS WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS TO ADMINISTER FIRST ROUND OF JOHNSON & JOHNSON VACCINE**

March 12, 2021 - Today, Grand Traverse County Health Department partnered with United Way of Northwest Michigan, Disability Network Northern Michigan, Community Mental Health, and others to administer some of the first Johnson & Johnson vaccines to those with barriers that may prevent them from attending other clinics. These individuals have many barriers such as visual, physical, hearing impairment, and others.

“Health Department staff met with our community partners on Thursday evening to make important adaptations to our mass vaccination site in order to better accommodate this special population. We were able to do our first hybrid clinic, vaccinating both inside the clinic and in vehicles for those with more severe mobility restrictions,” said Wendy Hirschenberger, Grand Traverse County Health Officer. “We will continue to adapt our clinics as needed to accommodate the most vulnerable populations.”

On February 27, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for Johnson & Johnson single-dose COVID-19 vaccine to prevent COVID-19 in individuals 18 years of age and older.

“We continue to be grateful to Grand Traverse County Health Department to be able to partner with them and support them in rolling this vaccine out to the community,” said Seth Johnson, Executive Director of United Way of Northwest Michigan “We, and our volunteers feel honored to be apart of helping offer this clinic to those who may otherwise not had access or the ability to get the vaccine.”

“Disability Network is grateful to work alongside our community partners in a coordinated effort to remove barriers and provide necessary accommodations for people with disabilities so they may access the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine. This will help protect people with disabilities so they may be safe and stay healthy,” said Jim Moore, Executive Director of Disability Network of Northern Michigan.

“The opportunity to serve adults with disabilities through the Hagerty Vaccination Clinic today was simply invaluable. Over the past year, Northern Lakes Community Mental Health and Traverse House Clubhouse have maintained a sense of community and connectedness with the population we serve to combat the isolation that this pandemic brought. This vaccine provides the hope we have been waiting for, and an opportunity to come back together in the safest way possible,” said Hannah Driver, Traverse House Director. “Having a specific clinic for those with

disabilities allowed us to overcome barriers and challenges that may have been faced within the larger community. For Traverse House, we were able to assist member registration, transportation, and had a direct contact to troubleshoot any concerns. Thank you to the Grand Traverse County Health Department, the Hagerty Center, and all of the volunteers who made this clinic run smoothly and so manageable for everyone,” added Driver.

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