

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Dr. Sharon Harris

516- 676-2008

safeglencove@yahoo.com

SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Pandemic of the Unvaccinated CDC Director Warns

According to a recent article in the New York Times, cases, hospitalizations and deaths remain far below last winter's COVID-19 peak, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) director urged people to get fully vaccinated as the highly contagious Delta variant of the coronavirus fuels outbreaks in the United States. Delta now accounts for more than half of new infections across the country, and case numbers have been rising in every state. Roughly 28,000 new cases are reported each day, up from just 11,000 a day less than a month ago.

Cases, hospitalizations and deaths remain far below last winter's peak, and vaccines are effective against Delta, but the number of new virus cases is likely to increase in the coming weeks, and those cases are likely to be concentrated in areas with low vaccine coverage. The CDC's biggest concern is that they are going to continue to see preventable cases, hospitalizations and deaths among the unvaccinated. The nation surpassed 34 million cumulative cases on Friday, according to a New York Times database. So far, data suggests that many of the vaccines — including the Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson shots — provide good protection against Delta, especially against the worst outcomes, including hospitalization and death. (Receiving a single dose of a two-shot regimen provides only weak protection against the variant, however.) Nearly 60 percent of U.S. adults have been fully vaccinated, but fewer than 50 percent of all Americans have been; only those 12 and older are eligible. The pace of vaccination has slowed considerably since the spring, and vaccine coverage remains highly uneven. Delta is already driving case numbers up in undervaccinated areas, including in parts of Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana.

In mid-May, when cases were on a decline, the CDC said fully vaccinated people could go maskless in most scenarios, and on July 4, President Biden hosted an event for essential workers and others at the White House to celebrate progress against the virus. As cases increase, Americans may have to navigate seemingly diverging messaging, with local health officials advising something potentially different than the CDC's broad guidance.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently repeated its recommendation that even vaccinated people should continue to wear masks, in part because of the global spread of Delta. The CDC has stood

by its mask guidance, however, noting the WHO's global purview and the fact that wealthy nations have obtained many of the available shots. Local officials in the United States can opt for more stringent measures to protect the unvaccinated.

In New York City, Mayor Bill de Blasio said there were currently no plans to reintroduce an indoor mask mandate for everyone citywide. The city has reported a recent streak of more than 400 cases per day, up from about 200 per day on average just a few weeks ago. Health officials are focused on hospitalizations which have remained low in recent weeks. About 53 percent of city residents are fully vaccinated, according to city data. Should hospitalization rates rise, the city will adapt.

The Biden administration narrowly missed their goal of having 70 percent of adults at least partially vaccinated by July 4th. The administration is making a renewed effort to try to reach those who have still not been vaccinated. Officials have also recently announced the creation of "surge response teams" to help hard-hit states manage Delta-driven outbreaks. Missouri and Nevada have already requested assistance.

The New York Times is an American daily newspaper based in New York City with a worldwide readership. For more information please visit www.nytimes.com.

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition is conducting an opioid prevention awareness campaign entitled. "Keeping Glen Cove SAFE," in order to educate and update the community regarding opioid use and its consequences. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit SAFE's website to learn more about the Opioid Epidemic at www.safeglencove.org.