

Planned Parenthood: Launches COVID-19 Vaccine Awareness Campaign

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Contact: Kristin Settle

(414) 289-3785

Kristin.settle@ppwi.org

Milwaukee, WI — Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin (PPWI) announced today that it is launching a bilingual COVID-19 vaccine awareness and education campaign supported by two grants from the State of Wisconsin. The effort, dubbed *Protect. Every. Body.* will include information about the vaccine in PPWI health centers and on the organization's website and social media channels as well as outreach by PPWI Promotores de Salud, or community health workers, who work with Spanish speaking communities. The campaign is intended to be person-centered and culturally-responsive while supporting individuals with their own health behavior and health care decision-making. PPWI will address patient and community concerns about the vaccine and provide accurate information along with local resources for vaccine access.

In a joint statement, Tanya Atkinson, PPWI president and CEO, and Maria Barker, Director of Latinx Programs and Initiatives, said, "COVID-19 has left our communities devastated. We have lost friends, neighbors, and family members in the past year to this deadly pandemic, and every day we see its convergence with existing health inequities that disproportionately impact the health, wellbeing, and financial stability of our patients – especially People of Color. In this moment, and as it pertains to the vaccine, Planned Parenthood's mission has never been clearer:

provide the high-quality care and trusted information people need, and our communities deserve, to make the best decisions about their bodies and live the life they want. We are committed to helping our patients stay healthy, strong, and protected against COVID-19.”

A core focus of PPWI’s outreach campaign will be ensuring that the hardest hit communities get the information they need to make informed health care choices. In Wisconsin, communities of color have experienced higher rates of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths since the pandemic began. Compared to White Wisconsin residents, Hispanic or Latinx residents have **1.7 times greater** case rates, Black residents have **2.1 times greater** hospitalization rates, and American Indian residents have **1.5 times greater** death rates. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, COVID has disproportionately impacted communities of color in large part due to barriers to health care access that result from centuries of systemic racism and continue today.

“As a trusted health care provider and educator, Planned Parenthood is uniquely positioned to reach populations who might otherwise not have access to health care or information about the COVID-19 vaccines,” added Barker. “Through our Promotores de Salud program, we have a skilled and knowledgeable group of Spanish speaking individuals who work within their own social networks to improve awareness and ultimately confidence in the COVID vaccine.”

A total of twenty-eight PPWI Promotores will work in nine communities across Wisconsin to provide culturally responsive education in Spanish.

For accurate, up-to-date information about the vaccines and other things you can do to stay healthy, visit www.ppwi.org/c19vaccine.

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Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin is a nonprofit health care provider serving 60,000 patients annually at 24 health centers throughout the state including in Milwaukee, Madison, La Crosse, Blair, Sheboygan, Wausau, Portage, Delevan, Waukesha, Appleton, Oshkosh, Green Bay, Racine, Kenosha, Sparta, West Bend, and Wisconsin Rapids.