

‘UpFront’: Milwaukee County seeks to boost COVID-19 vaccinations among vulnerable residents

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Milwaukee County is trying to identify its most vulnerable citizens and connect them with COVID-19 vaccine.

The new effort uses census data in 10 county zip codes to locate underserved people and help them get vaccinations, said Dr. Ben Weston, director of medical services in the Milwaukee County Office of Emergency Management.

“There are two stories in Milwaukee County. You either are low vulnerability or higher socioeconomic status, and you’re getting vaccine. Or you’re the opposite. High vulnerability community, and you’re just not getting enough vaccine,” Weston said in an interview aired Sunday on “UpFront,” produced in partnership with WisPolitics.com.

“So with those stark disparities, with those two stories in Milwaukee County, we wanted to overcome that, bring equity, more equity, to the vaccination process,” Weston said.

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The effort, based on a model developed locally, could reach up to 230,000 people. The county and city of Milwaukee have added vaccination sites to meet the need.

Also on the program, U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, said he has no regrets over his recent remarks that some called racist.

Johnson told the syndicated “Joe Pags Show” that he was not worried during the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol, a riot carried out by mostly white supporters of former

President Trump. But if the crowd had been Black Lives Matter or “antifa” protesters, Johnson said, he “might have been a little concerned.”

“There were no racial undertones in my comments,” Johnson told WISN 12 reporter Matt Smith.

“So I know the left is exploiting that. But there weren’t. This is about riots and comparing the rioting we saw throughout the summer,” Johnson said.

“I was just making the distinction between the people that I know — that I personally know that support President Trump, that would never even contemplate breaking the law. Those people love this country,” Johnson said.

In a separate interview with Smith, Democratic U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, said she was “horrified” by Johnson’s “shameful comments.”

A Black state senator from Milwaukee also was outraged by Johnson’s remarks.

“Of course a racist is going to say that they’re not racist. The fact that he’s defending his comments and playing the victim shows he is who he is,” said state Sen. LaTonya Johnson, D-Milwaukee.

See more from the program:

<http://www.wisn.com/upfront>