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August 23, 2021

Tomás J. Aragón, MD, DrPH
Director and State Public Health Officer
California Department of Public Health

RE: Federal CDC Pharmacy partnership

Dear Dr. Aragón,

The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) writes to express our concern over the discontinuation of the federal CDC Pharmacy Partnership for Long Term Care Program and requests that CDPH urge the CDC to resume this program in preparation for administering COVID-19 vaccine booster doses.

There is a clear need to provide booster doses to Skilled Nursing Facility and Long-Term Care Facility residents as they live in congregate settings and are often elderly and frail, putting them at highest risk for severe COVID-19, hospitalization, and death.

These partnerships are necessary for local health departments to provide timely and equitable vaccination services to vulnerable populations. Healthcare systems and outpatient medical practices will not have the capacity to provide booster doses and will rely on public health to vaccinate those eligible for boosters, especially during the current surge.

California Health Officers remain dedicated to reducing hospitalizations and death associated with the SARS-CoV-2 virus through vaccination. If CDC is unable to provide this partnership, CCLHO strongly recommends that CDPH implement a similar program.

CCLHO was established in statute in 1947 to advise the California Department of Health Services (now California Department of Public Health), other departments, boards, commissions, and officials of federal, state and local agencies, the Legislature and other organizations on all matters affecting health. CCLHO membership consists of all legally appointed physician health officers in California's 61 city and county jurisdictions.

We thank you for your continued partnership and collaboration with you about matters of importance to the state and local health officers. Should you have any questions, please contact me by email at karen.relucio@countyofnapa.org or by phone at (707) 253-4566.

Sincerely,

Karen Relucio, MD
President, California Conference of Local Health Officers

