



MEDIA ADVISORY

Wednesday, April 14, 2021

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Gov. Whitmer's Protect Michigan Commission joins with local health experts to host Northern Michigan COVID-19 virtual press conference Thursday morning

Online event will highlight regional strategies for getting more shots in arms among youth, Native Americans and employees at large companies, as well as introduce Northern Michigan's new COVID-19 student ambassador volunteers

WHEN: 10:30 a.m. Thursday, April 15, 2021 | Media Q&A will follow

WHERE: Available to credentialed news media **LIVE** via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83142153114?pwd=OWpFdjV4MHdENnUzRU9VamNOYzR5UT09>

For those who cannot attend, the event will be posted afterward on the Michigan Dept. Of Health and Human Services Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/michiganhhs/>

WHO:

Protect Michigan Commission (PMC) Director **Kerry Ebersole Singh**

Christine Nefcy, M.D., FAAP, Chief Medical Officer, Munson Healthcare

Lisa Peacock, Health Officer for both the Health Department of Northwest Michigan and the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department.

Denise Bryan, Health Officer for Michigan's District Health Dept. #4 that includes Alpena, Cheboygan, Montmorency, and Presque Isle counties

Dr. Terry J. Samuels, Medical Director, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians

Two teen-aged students from Traverse City and Alpena, respectively, who have volunteered to serve as Protect Michigan Commission COVID-19 student ambassadors with the aim of encouraging their peers to get vaccinated:

- **Lauren Stallman**, 16, a junior of Traverse City Central High School who received her first Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination March 31 at Northwestern Michigan College's Hagerty Center in Traverse City and is scheduled for her second dose April 21.
- **Evan Carlson**, 18, a senior at Alpena High School who is planning to receive his COVID-19 vaccination Friday, April 16, at the Alcona Community Health Center

WHAT:

Virtual press conference where PMC Director Ebersole Singh and healthcare experts from Northern Michigan will provide new regional COVID-19 vaccination

data updates and share their respective strategies for getting more shots in arms for key target audiences moving forward, including but not limited to youth, Native Americans and by inviting large Northern Michigan companies to offer mass on-site clinics for their employees .

In addition, Ebersole Singh will introduce two Northern Michigan high school students who have volunteered to serve as Protect Michigan Commission COVID-19 ambassadors. The teens are urging their peers to get vaccinated and continue to practice preventative measures such as properly wearing masks, social distancing and frequent handwashing to reduce the spread of the virus until the vast majority of people have been vaccinated.

Individuals 16 and 17 years of age must receive the Pfizer vaccine only. Moderna and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines are only recommended for those 18 years and older. Minors ages 16 and 17 will need a parent or legal guardian to accompany them to their appointment in order to provide consent to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. In some counties, the parent or legal guardian may be able to provide consent through a note or a phone call that has been verified by two nurses. Check with the vaccine provider first to see if this is an option where you live.

INFO: Gov. Whitmer created the [Protect Michigan Commission](#) in January. The appointees represent a diverse array of industries, professions and backgrounds. Housed within MDHHS, they are charged with helping to ensure every Michigander has a plan to get vaccinated against COVID-19 once the opportunity becomes available. Their goal is facilitating at least 100,000 shots in arms daily. The most recent [vaccine prioritization guidelines](#) can be found on [Michigan's COVID-19 website](#).