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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Topeka, Kan. – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) will host the annual press conference to kickoff flu vaccination season today. CDC recommends that people get a flu vaccine by the end of October before the flu starts spreading through their community. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies that protect against flu to develop in the body, however, getting vaccinated later can still be beneficial. CDC estimates that flu has resulted in between 9.2 million and 35.6 million illnesses each year in the United States.

CDC recommends annual influenza vaccination for everyone 6 months and older, and particularly important for groups at highest risk of severe illness, which include adults over age 65, children under age 5, pregnant women and those with underlying health conditions, such as lung or heart disease. There are many different flu viruses and they are constantly changing. The composition of U.S. flu vaccines is reviewed annually and updated as needed to match circulating flu viruses. Flu vaccines protect against the three or four viruses (depending on the vaccine) that research suggests will be most common for that year. This means even if someone received the flu vaccine last year, they need a new one this year.

CDC has released a seasonal flu vaccination campaign [toolkit](#). Materials are available to assist partners in communicating about the importance of vaccination. This digital toolkit includes details on events/activities, sample social media and newsletter content, graphics, web assets and media prep material. This material is downloadable, shareable and some of the material is customizable. Ones that we find particularly beneficial are the [Fact Sheet](#), flu IQ widget, and the flu vaccine finder widget.

About Great Plains QIN

Great Plains QIN is actively working with providers, patients, partners and stakeholders to implement best practices to increase immunization rates for influenza, pneumococcal disease and herpes zoster. According to the CDC, immunization rates among adults in the United States are much lower than national targets. Several interventions, however, have proven successful. For example, recommendations from healthcare professionals have repeatedly shown to increase immunization rates. System-level changes that include routine vaccine assessment, recommendations and administration also lead to improvement. To learn more, visit greatplainsqin.org

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For more information, visit cdc.gov/flu