Press Release

January 2, 2025

Southwest Health District Urges Community to Get Updated Flu and COVID-19 Vaccines Amid Rising Respiratory Illnesses

Albany, GA— With the holiday season in full swing, the Southwest Health District (SWHD) has observed a significant increase in flu and COVID-19 cases across the region. To protect yourself and your loved ones, SWHD strongly encourages everyone to get updated flu and COVID-19 vaccines at their local health department.

"Getting vaccinated is the most effective way to prevent severe illness and hospitalization from these respiratory diseases," said Dr. Charles Ruis, Health Director of SWHD. "We want to ensure that our community stays healthy and safe during this time."

For more information on vaccine availability and locations, please visit our website at www.SWHealthDistrict.org. You can also contact your local health department directly for assistance.

In addition to vaccination, SWHD recommends the following preventive measures to reduce the spread of respiratory illnesses:

- **Cover your coughs and sneezes** with a tissue or your elbow.
- **Wash your hands frequently** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- **Avoid close contact** with sick individuals.
- **Stay home when you are sick** to prevent spreading illness to others.
- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces** such as doorknobs and countertops.
- **Practice healthy habits** such as eating nutritious foods, exercising, and getting enough rest.

Together, we can help curb the spread of respiratory illnesses and keep our community healthy. For more information, please visit www.SWHealthDistrict.org or contact your local health department.

Baker	Calhoun	Colquitt	Decatur	Dougherty	Early	Grady
Lee	Miller	Mitchell	Seminole	Terrell	Thomas	Worth