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Media contact:

Cynthia Charles, NCHA

Ccharles@ncha.org

(919) 677-4223 (office); (336) 816-4939 (mobile)

North Carolina Healthcare Association Announces Position Supporting COVID-19 Vaccine Requirements for Healthcare Employees

Several health systems will be among the first to require vaccination of employees

Cary, NC – July 22, 2021 – The North Carolina Healthcare Association ([NCHA](#)) today is announcing a position approved by the association’s board of trustees supporting COVID-19 vaccination requirements for healthcare workers. It is also commending several of its member health systems that intend to be first in the state to require COVID vaccination for their employees, including Atrium Health, Cone Health, Duke University Health System, Novant Health, Wake Forest Baptist Health and the following UNC Health hospitals – UNC Medical Center, UNC Rex, UNC Johnston, UNC Chatham, UNC Rockingham and UNC Southeastern.

A statement sent to the healthcare association’s 130 member health systems and hospitals today said:

“North Carolina’s hospitals and health systems exist to improve and protect the health of our communities, which is why they place patient, visitor and team member health and safety at the heart of the care they provide. In keeping with that goal, the North Carolina Healthcare Association strongly supports hospital and health system policies that require all hospital employees and clinical team members to be vaccinated against COVID-19. NCHA recognizes that each hospital and health system is unique and encourages each to determine the appropriate time to implement a requirement. All hospitals should continue to require other infection control measures per Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance, such as wearing masks and other personal protective gear.

Our state’s health systems and hospitals have seen first-hand how debilitating and deadly this disease can be. When the COVID-19 vaccines were first released, the NCHA and its members strongly encouraged all North Carolinians, including hospital and health system employees, to get vaccinated against COVID-19. In the months since, clinical data has shown the COVID-19 vaccines to be extraordinarily safe and effective, and our best tool to prevent the spread of the disease.

The evidence is clear – vaccination against COVID-19 has prevented people from becoming seriously ill, requiring hospitalization, or dying from the virus, as well as spreading it to others. To date, more than 4.7 million North Carolinians and more than 161 million Americans have been vaccinated with minimal



side effects. Most concerning, however, is the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services reporting that nearly 99% of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths during May and June were among people not fully vaccinated. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported a sharp rise in new coronavirus cases as the delta variant becomes increasingly pervasive.

Protecting patients, visitors and healthcare personnel from COVID-19 continues to be of paramount importance. Hospital and health system employee vaccination against COVID-19 is vital to safely care for patients by protecting them from infection, and to mitigate the spread of the virus within healthcare facilities and among clinicians, patients and their families and friends.”

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