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Feb. 9, 2021

To: ODDS Stakeholders

From: Lilia Teninty, Director, Office of Developmental Disabilities Services

Subject: Reminder of Individual Choice Regarding COVID-19 Vaccines

COVID-19 vaccinations are an important part of protecting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families and support staff.

Oregon's I/DD service system is built on the fundamental belief that people with I/DD are empowered to make their own decisions to live full lives in their communities. This means that people with I/DD have the right to make their own decision about whether they want to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

People with I/DD can discuss the decision with trusted family members, friends, or professionals (like a health care provider) for support to make a decision. They should also be encouraged to always feel free to ask questions, ask for information to be rephrased, or ask to have the information be provided in a way they understand.

Providers and case managers must help people make an informed decision in a neutral manner and should not hinder a person's decision regarding vaccination. If a provider is hindering a person with I/DD's right to make a decision, that can be considered an abuse/neglect situation and will be investigated as such.

ODDS has created several guides to help case management entities and providers support people to make decisions. There is a [COVID-19 vaccine fact sheet](#) and also a [medical rights fact sheet](#) to assist people.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also has guidance in hopes of offering assurance to those with questions about the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine:

[Benefits of COVID-19 vaccination](#)

[CDC summary of misconceptions about COVID-19 vaccination](#)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lilia". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning.

Lilia Teninty
Director
Office of Developmental Disabilities Services

Previous Director's Messages are available at

<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/DD/Pages/messages.aspx>

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