Warren County Commissioners Tour COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic

(BELVIDERE, NJ – February 17, 2021) – Warren County's three COVID-19 vaccination clinics run by the county Health Department have administered more than 4,000 doses of the Moderna vaccine since starting operations seven weeks ago.

Board of County Commissioners Director James R. Kern III and Deputy Director Jason J. Sarnoski toured the vaccine clinic at the Good Will Fire Company #1 firehouse in Belvidere today, observing the county employees and volunteers who run the site and administer the doses.

Independence Township resident Clifford W. Gibbs receives his first COVID-19 vaccine from nurse Jamie Kovalsky at one of Warren County's vaccine clinics as County Commissioners Jason J. Sarnoski and Director James R. Kern III observe.

"I am so incredibly proud of Warren County's staff and volunteers who make this vaccination site successful," Kern said after the tour.

"We are committed to making sure as many of our residents as possible can receive this vaccine," Kern said, adding, "As more dosages becomes available from the federal and state government, we will be able to handle an increased supply."

Sarnoski said that he too was "very impressed with Warren County's vaccine distribution site," adding, "I want to thank all of the front line workers and volunteers who are dedicating countless hours to get this done. They are the real heroes."

Warren County started its vaccine efforts by targeting front line health workers and first responders, and now is vaccinating people age 65 and older, as well as those between the ages of 18 and 64 who have at least one medical condition that poses a high risk for COVID-19 infection

as per Centers for Disease Control guidelines. You must live, work, or go to school in Warren County to be able to receive a vaccination from a Warren County government vaccination clinic.

"The fast and efficient administration of the vaccine will help us get out of this pandemic and back to normal life," Sarnoski noted.

According to Dennis Riley, Deputy Director of Public Safety who is coordinating COVID-19 pandemic response efforts, as of yesterday, Warren County had administrated 3,517 first doses of the vaccine – with 1,833 going to people 65 and older – and 811 second doses – 183 of them going to those 65 and older – at its three clinic sites.

Independence Township resident Clifford W. Gibbs receives his reminder card to return for his COVID-19 vaccine booster from nurse Jamie Kovalsky.

Two of the residents receiving the vaccine today were Clifford W. Gibbs, 73, and his wife, Ruth, 72, of Independence Township. The couple said they were impressed with the efficiency of the vaccine clinic.

Warren County Deputy Director of Public Safety Dennis Riley, who is coordinating COVID-19 pandemic response efforts, chats with Ruth and Clifford Gibbs after they received their COVID-19 vaccines.

"It's very well organized," Ruth Gibbs said. "And I didn't even feel anything," her husband added, noting the nurse who administered his vaccine was "a very good shot-giver."

That "shot-giver" was Jamie Kovalsky, a nurse with Harmony Township school, who has been volunteering her time at the Good Will firehouse vaccine site since it opened. Every Wednesday for the past four weeks she has been administering vaccines along with other volunteers.

"It's rewarding to get and give the vaccine," said Kovalsky, noting she is happy to be doing her part against COVID-19.

Warren County is using three locations – the firehouse in Belvidere, North Warren Regional

High School in Blairstown, and the Warren County Library's Southwest Branch in Greenwich – and initially used the community center in the Franklin Township Municipal Building.

"The County's COVID-19 vaccination program is the largest vaccination effort in the history of the Warren County Health Department. It would not be possible without the help of multiple county agencies, community volunteers and our facility partners," said county Health Officer Pete Summers.

Warren County also continues to run a drive-through COVID-19 testing site with St. Luke's University Healthcare Network at the St. Luke's Belvidere Health Center, 187 County Route

Warren County Deputy Director of Public Safety Dennis Riley, who is coordinating COVID-19 pandemic response efforts, discusses operations of the county's vaccine clinic with County Commissioner Jason J. Sarnoski and Commissioner Director James R. Kern III, and Thomas Nigro of the Warren County Health Department.

519 in White Township, just south of Belvidere. Testing is by appointment only, for those who are symptomatic or who have been in close contact with someone who has the virus.

Information about COVID-19 testing and vaccines from the county and from other health partners is available on the county government website, www.co.warren.nj.us.

For COVID-19 testing: www.co.warren.nj.us/Healthdept/WCCOVIDTestingSite.html.

For COVID-19 vaccines: www.co.warren.nj.us/Healthdept/WCCOVIDVaccine.html.

Inside Belvidere Manor, the banquet hall at Belvidere's Good Will Fire Company #1 firehouse, where Warren County conducts one of its three COVID-19 vaccine clinics. Warren County has administered more than 4,000 doses of the Moderna vaccine in seven weeks of operation at its clinics staffed by county employees and volunteer medical professionals.