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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ventura County Health Care Agency Vaccine and Medication Ineffectiveness Update

(Ventura County, Calif.) — In November 2018, the Pharmacy Department at Ventura County Medical Center discovered that a change in the packaging process of refrigerated vaccines and medications given within our clinic system had the potential to bring temperatures below the recommended 2-8 degrees centigrade, possibly compromising the effectiveness of most of these vaccines and medications.

Since discovering this, several measures have been put in place to ensure that this does not happen in the future, including the use of data-tracking thermometers with each delivery of refrigerated vaccines and medications. Additionally, measures are being taken to allow for direct delivery of vaccines and medications from the manufacturer or wholesaler to the primary care clinics throughout our health care system.

Of the original approximately 23,000 patients who may have been affected, the Health Care Agency has done extensive outreach, with calls to high risk populations and notification letters to all patients who received affected vaccines and medications. Agency physicians crafted treatment plans and coordinated with case managers to ensure any patients in need of follow-up treatment have their healthcare needs addressed.

The Agency sent a notification to the public in December 2018, and since then, we have notified an additional 7,000 patients who received a 2017 flu vaccine, recommending they receive this year's flu vaccine.

To date, a nurse support line, staffed from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday through Friday, has responded to more than 400 calls. Patients who received a potentially ineffective vaccine or medication may call (805) 652-7660, with questions or concerns, and the Health Care Agency encourages anyone who thinks this may have affected them to call. Additional information can be found at www.vhca.org/vaccinesupport.

The Ventura County Health Care Agency has resolved the root cause of this issue and, as always, makes the health and well-being of our patients our first priority.

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