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Representative Novak Guest Column

Vaccination Rates

This past January, I started hearing that there were issues with the state's vaccine distribution program. Upon further review it turns out our local hospitals had vaccines that were ready to be used but were being held back by the state's Department of Health Services (DHS). After learning about this, I joined my fellow southwest Wisconsin legislators in writing a letter to DHS Secretary Designee Andrea Palm demanding DHS ease restrictions on healthcare providers and let local hospitals continue to deliver lifesaving vaccines.

We've all weathered this pandemic together and the thought of having unused vaccines just sitting around was unacceptable. Shortly after writing this letter it was announced by DHS that they would be expanding vaccine eligibility to those 65 and older. Simply put, expanding the vaccine eligibility guidelines was the right thing to do. I'm happy to see that the deployment of the vaccine has ramped up dramatically since the bumpy start in January.

Southwest Wisconsin currently ranks among the highest in vaccination rates across the state. According to DHS, Richland County has 19.8%, Sauk County has 16.4%, Iowa County has 19.8%, Lafayette County has 19.1%, and Green County has 18.8% of their population that have received a first dose.

I will continue advocating for our district as we push through this pandemic together. If you have questions regarding your current eligibility to receive the vaccine or need help finding a location to get vaccinated please don't hesitate to reach out to me by emailing Rep.Novak@legis.wisconsin.gov or by calling (608) 266-7502.

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