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Wolf Administration, Medical Professionals Emphasize Vaccination Safety for LGBTQ Communities

Harrisburg, PA – Today, the Pennsylvania Commission on LGBTQ Affairs hosted a discussion about the importance of ensuring LGBTQIA+ communities in Pennsylvania receive reliable and trustworthy information about COVID-19 vaccines. The Commission hosted a Facebook Live event entitled *Vax Facts: Afternoon Tea on LGBTQ Health*, the fourth in a series that seeks to provide relevant and accurate information about COVID-19 vaccines and address the questions of concerned citizens.

Pennsylvania Commission on LGBTQ Affairs Executive Director Rafael Alvarez Febo moderated the panel, which sought to dispel myths and answer questions specifically about LGBTQ+ health in relation to the COVID-19 vaccines. Alvarez Febo was joined by panelists Dr. Denise Johnson, Acting Physician General, Dr. Eloho Ufomata, Assistant Professor of Medicine Division of General Internal Medicine and Advisory Dean University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, and Sarah Rosso, Executive Director Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation.

“As members of a community that’s experienced the worst of the HIV epidemic in the late 80’s, LGBTQ+ people have taken the COVID-19 pandemic seriously,” said Alvarez Febo. “Ensuring that our community is well informed about the COVID-19 vaccines allows people to make the best decisions for their health.”

“COVID-19 has disproportionately affected vulnerable communities, we know that there have been inequities along for communities of color and under resourced communities,” said Dr. Ufomata. “Unfortunately, we do not have robust data collection for LGBTQ folk. We do know that historically, this population has faced vulnerability with access to healthcare. That’s why I think efforts like this are so important, so that folks can have high quality information, specific to the needs of LGBTQ people, so that each person can make the best decisions regarding vaccination.”

“LGBTQ+ Pennsylvanians need accurate information about COVID-19 vaccines and how they might impact them,” said Rosso. “This is especially important when you consider barriers to care and lack of affirming care many LGBTQ+ folks experience across the commonwealth.”

The *Vax Facts* panel discussed topics relevant to the vaccine safety for the LGBTQIA+ community including PreP, HIV treatments and Transgender affirming care.

COVID-19 vaccines are free, safe, reliable and accessible. Visit vaccines.gov (vacunas.gov en español) to find a vaccine provider near you.

Every Thursday, *Vax Facts* panel discussions will continue to dive into topics around the COVID-19 vaccine, specifically highlighting vaccine hesitancy and the communities that it affects most. The next conversation will be held on **Thursday, June 17, 2021 at 12 PM** and will focus on vaccine concerns in the Black community.

More details from today's event including the full video and information about the panelists can be found on [Facebook](#). Video of the event will also be available on [PAcast](#).

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