



Reducing Vaccine Hesitancy. Our Rotary Clubs CAN Answer this New Call

When passion and raw determination are added to the miracle of modern vaccines, great things happen. Over the last 30 years, Rotary and its partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative have seen the reduction of polio cases worldwide, by 99.9 percent. As long as polio and the many other vaccine preventable diseases still circulate anywhere in the world, here in the US, we are still vulnerable and must continue to be vaccinated.

Over the last 2 years, the world has seen unsurpassed death and illness from yet another virus. In reading the Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation Position Statement on COVID-19 Vaccination, we are reminded that we have even more work to do – right here at home.

(www.rotary.org/en/rotary-international-and-rotary-foundation-release-position-statement-vaccination)

Summarized as:

1. Global vaccination is the path to ending the pandemic, and we strongly encourage vaccination for all individuals, including our members.
2. Misinformation hinders the fight against COVID-19, and we are committed to providing our members with science-based information.
3. Rotary is engaged in assuring equity in vaccine access to all people.
4. Rotary salutes health care workers everywhere as they continue to provide lifesaving services. We encourage clubs to offer recognition and encouragement to these heroes.
5. Rotary and Rotaract clubs are encouraged to redouble their efforts to support COVID-19 prevention and vaccination efforts.
6. As one of the greatest advances of modern medicine, *vaccines are safe, effective and save millions of lives each year*. They have eliminated or controlled numerous diseases such as polio, smallpox, measles, and Ebola, and now, *there is the opportunity to end the COVID-19 pandemic through vaccination*. The eradication of polio remains the goal of the highest order for Rotary. We can continue to apply the lessons we have learned in fighting polio to COVID-19 response efforts.

More than two years into the pandemic and 975,000+ American have died as a result of COVID-19. As Rotary members, we are particularly aware of the important role vaccines play in halting the spread of disease. We *must* continue to support polio immunization efforts around the world. . . but with this call to action statement - Rotary International is asking for more – they are asking us to bring this effort home.

What can we do?

- We can share fact-based vaccination information, easily obtained from our PA Immunization Coalition(s), located throughout our State.
- We can distribute packets of vaccine information that encourage vaccine acceptance, to day care centers, pediatricians and hospital clinics.
- We can volunteer at vaccine clinics
- We can hold a blood drive.

There is a lot we can be doing to answer this call, getting very creative within our own communities. We nervously accepted the opportunity to speak out for the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, about the realities of life after experiencing the effects of a vaccine preventable disease.

Engage your Rotary Club to get involved as a partner supporting these efforts in your community. We are doing this not only for ourselves, but for future generations.

Yours in Rotary Service,

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