



For Immediate Release

## **Cross-Sector Panel of Experts Offers Trusted Guidance and Answers New Yorkers' Questions on the Importance of Older Adult New Yorkers Getting Vaccinated Against Covid-19**

*Widespread vaccination among adults will change the course of aging for all of New York City.*

New York, NEW YORK (January 21, 2021) – The New York City Department for the Aging, the Age-friendly NYC Commission, and the Global Coalition on Aging (GCOA), the world's leading business voice on aging, collaborated yesterday on a webinar to help build trust and acceptance of the Covid-19 vaccines for New York's older adults. The webinar, *Science, Older New Yorkers, and Covid-19 Vaccination: A Virtual Forum Advancing Trust and Confidence for Older New Yorkers*, aimed to increase the share of all New Yorkers vaccinated against Covid-19, with a special focus on the health and wellbeing of older adults. A second webinar, on February 9, from 2:30pm-4pm, will focus on community organizations working with older adults across the city.

"We are here to spread the word: the vaccine is safe, free, and available for older New Yorkers," said Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez, Commissioner of the NYC Department for the Aging. "We brought together an impressive group of panelists to engage older adults, build trust within our communities, and help get older adults vaccinated."

"The Covid-19 vaccines are safe and effective, and we need all New Yorkers to do the right thing to protect their friends and family, which is to get the vaccine once eligible," said Health Commissioner Dr. Dave A. Chokshi. "Each of us knows and has worried about an aging parent, grandparent, or other relative during this pandemic. We must do everything that we can for our families, but also our city."

The webinar was led by Commissioner Cortés-Vázquez and moderated by Michael Hodin, CEO of the Global Coalition on Aging. The expert panel included Dr. Susan Beane, Executive Medical Director, Healthfirst, and a member of the Age-friendly NYC Commission; Dr. Wafaa El-Sadr, Founder and Director, ICAP, and University Professor and Dr. Mathilde Krim-amfAR Chair of Global Health, Columbia University Mailman's School of Public Health; Dr. Jennifer Rosen, Director, Epidemiology and Surveillance, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; and Dr. John

Beard, Former Director, Ageing and Life Course at the World Health Organization (WHO), and Professor, University of New South Wales, Australia, and Chair of Global Coalition on Aging Advisory Council.

Age-friendly NYC has been a leader in healthier and more active aging since its founding, ten years ago. Now, in 2021, the Age-friendly City movement takes on an even more important role as the United Nations (UN) and the WHO declare 2021-2030 to be the Decade of Healthy Ageing.

“We had always looked at the Decade as an important platform for progress on transforming our 21<sup>st</sup> century miracle of longevity to one filled with healthier, fulfilled, and happier lives,” said Michael Hodin, CEO of the Global Coalition on Aging. “Encouraging older adults to make sure they are fully vaccinated against preventable diseases – such as shingles, flu, pneumococcal pneumonia – is built into the fabric and spirit of the Decade’s goals,” Hodin explained. “But now, with Covid-19, we are pleased to partner with the City and the Age-friendly NYC Commission to encourage all of us, including older New Yorkers, to get vaccinated. The Covid-19 vaccines protect our health, our parents’ health, and is critical for reopening NYC and getting back to the vibrancy, fun, and excitement of the greatest city on the planet. And with the UN here in NYC, our collaboration for the Decade takes on greater significance during a global pandemic that has placed older New Yorkers at greatest risk.” Hodin also pointed out the new [Alliance To Beat Covid-19 | A Global Outreach & Awareness Campaign to Get Everyone Vaccinated](#) as an important resource on the trust and confidence, especially for older adults, to get vaccinated.

“The partnership among the NYC Age-friendly Commission, the New York City Department for the Aging, and the Global Coalition on Aging is built on a multi-sector, New York-wide constituency,” said Kevin Crain, Chair of the Commission, and a senior executive at Bank of America. “The Commission looks forward to joining all New Yorkers in this next critical phase of the pandemic – getting everyone vaccinated and allowing aging New Yorkers to reemerge as a vital part of New York City’s economic, social, and community life.”

###

*Please contact Susan Wile Schwarz, Director of Communications, Global Coalition on Aging, for more information: [sschwarz@globalcoalitiononaging.com](mailto:sschwarz@globalcoalitiononaging.com) or by phone +1 917 946 1254.*