April 13, 2021

KDPH Joins Other States in Following FDA and CDC Guidance Pausing J&J Vaccinations

Early this morning, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a joint statement concerning six reported cases of cerebral venous sinus thrombosis combined with low platelet counts occurring in women between the ages of 18 to 48 who have received the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine.

Earlier today, Governor Andy Beshear and Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) Commissioner Dr. Steven Stack joined other national and state leaders, including Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, to discuss reviewing data involving the cases. ***None of the six cases are in individuals in Kentucky***. As a result of these reported cases and in an abundance of caution, the Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) is following FDA and CDC guidance and recommendations and pausing the Janssen / Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccinations in Kentucky until further notice.

DPH and Local Health Departments are working to provide Pfizer or Moderna vaccines for individuals with previously scheduled appointments for the J&J vaccine. In some cases, this may require rescheduling, and patience is requested while scheduling arrangements and adjustments are made.

Individuals who have received the J&J vaccine and develop severe headache, abdominal pain leg pain or shortness of breath within three weeks after vaccination should contact their health care providers. DPH urges all health care providers to be aware of the potential for these adverse events and plan for appropriate treatment required with these types of blood clots.

The CDC is convening a meeting of its Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) tomorrow to review the available data and make addition recommendations. The FDA is also conducting its own analysis.

Until these analyses have been completed, the FDA has advised that J&J COVID-19 vaccine administration be paused. This morning, Dr. Stack communicated this

message to vaccine administration sites throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Dr. Stack said, “That this concern has been identified in as few as six people out of more than 6.8 people vaccinated should be a reassuring sign that the safety surveillance system is operating as intended.”

He added that it is important that FDA and CDC safety reviews occur and that we await further information from these experts before reaching additional conclusions.

Safe and effective vaccines are a critical tool to protecting our people and putting this pandemic behind us and we are committed to ensuring that all persons have access to the information they need to make informed decisions.