



**PROTECTION & ADVOCACY PROJECT
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**ND Protection & Advocacy Project Partners with State Council on Developmental Disabilities
To Address Vaccine Hesitancy for People with Disabilities**

(Bismarck, ND) The US Administration on Community Living awarded grants to the North Dakota Protection & Advocacy Project (P&A) and the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) to address the issue of vaccine hesitancy among populations with disabilities. People with disabilities are more likely than are those without disabilities to have chronic health conditions and to face barriers to accessing health care. According to the CDC, these and other health and social inequities have placed people with disabilities at increased risk for COVID-19–related illness and death, yet they face unique barriers to receiving a vaccine.

Data shows that people with disabilities have lower rates of vaccination in the US. This disparity is most pronounced with younger populations. A CDC report states, only 34% of people ages 18-24 and 36% of people ages 25-29 with a disability are vaccinated. Respectively, that is 13% and 14% less than counterparts with no disability. This could be due to trouble with accessibility of vaccination sites, accessibility of informational materials, or concerns related to health insurance and costs.

To address this problem, P&A and the SCDD set out to educate people with disabilities and their support networks through short informational videos. Julie Horntvedt, SCDD Executive Director states, “It’s important for people with disabilities to have accurate information so they can make an informed decision.” Veronica Zietz, Executive Director of P&A explains, “We want to encourage people with disabilities to get the facts and talk to their health care provider.” The informational videos and supplementary materials will be available through multiple media platform and are also available on [P&A’s website](#).

The North Dakota Protection & Advocacy Project is a federally mandated, independent state agency established in 1977 to advance the human and legal rights of people with disabilities. P&A’s mission is to champion the equality and inclusion of people with disabilities where we live, work and play. P&A fulfills its mission by providing services to individuals with disabilities and their support networks; these services include information and referral, assistance with self-advocacy, education and training, advocacy services, legal representation, protective services, and systems and legislative advocacy.

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