

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Update: Meningococcal Infections and Vaccination Clinics at Santa Clara University

Santa Clara County, CA: 4,923 doses of meningococcal B vaccine – *which protects against the serogroup B strain of meningococcal infection* – were administered to students, for free, at four vaccination clinics on the Santa Clara University campus on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Monday.

Three Santa Clara University (SCU) students became ill on Sunday January 31st and were confirmed to be infected with the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis* [nye-SEER-ee-ah men-in-JIT-teh-dis], serogroup B. Two of the ill students developed meningitis as a result of the bacterial infection, while a third developed septicemia (a blood infection). All three students have been discharged from the hospital in good condition.

The vaccination clinics held on the University campus were a cooperative effort between the University and the Santa Clara County Public Health Department (SCCPHD), with assistance from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). Using federal funds from the Section 317 Immunization Program administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDPH provided approximately 5,000 doses of the vaccine at no cost for the purpose of outbreak response and control. CDPH will provide an additional 5,000 doses next month, when students return for their second dose in the two-dose vaccine series. The retail cost of each dose is usually \$160. Michael Engh, S.J., the President of Santa Clara University, said, "We are extremely grateful for the leadership and professional expertise of the Santa Clara County Public Health Department. They have been invaluable partners in managing the situation on campus. Our students are our number one priority, and the County has been right there with us helping to ensure the health and well-being of our student body."

While many SCU students had long wait times to receive their vaccination, the scale and speed with which the meningococcal vaccination clinics were stood up is unprecedented. "We are very impressed with how quickly the vaccine was offered to students. This vaccine is a new tool that can help protect against serogroup B meningococcal disease," said Dr. Rana Hajjeh, Director of CDC's Division of Bacterial Diseases.

These clinics would not have been possible without the dedication of dozens of Santa Clara County and SCU staff and volunteers who worked many hours of overtime, including during evenings and weekends. "The short amount of time—less than 48 hours—between the confirmation of the outbreak and the start of mass vaccination clinics set a national record for this disease. I am very proud and grateful to think of the talent, dedication and sheer grit required to make these clinics happen," said Santa Clara County Health Officer, Dr. Sara Cody. "Hats off to the staff of Santa Clara University and the Santa Clara County Public Health Department."

No additional updates are anticipated at this time.

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