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For Immediate Release

**ElderSource, AHEC Team to Offer COVID Informational Workshops**

JACKSONVILLE, FL – Misinformation about the COVID-19 virus and vaccine is often a reason some individuals do not get vaccinated. The Northeast Florida Area Health Education Center (AHEC), with funding from the Florida Department of Elder Affairs through ElderSource, wants to help increase vaccination rates by offering free workshops to bust the myths and eliminate doubt about the COVID vaccines.

The free workshops are offered every other Monday at Community Health Outreach, at 5126 Timuquana Road and Daily Manna Serving Center at 2659 Edison Avenue and the, every other Tuesday. However, community and church leaders are invited to contact AHEC to schedule sessions. English and Spanish speaking facilitators are available to present classes in Duval, Clay, Baker, Flagler, Nassau, St. Johns and Volusia counties.

Each session features general facts about the COVID-19 virus, the health impacts and long-term effects as well as information about how the vaccine works in the body and possible side effects. Facts and myths about the vaccine and how to overcome vaccine hesitancy will be presented. Most workshops also offer the opportunity for participants to get vaccinated onsite, said Tonia Harris, AHEC Executive Director.

“For the past month, I have been out in the community listening to people about why they are scared to get the vaccine,” Harris said. “Their fear is real, but I believe this workshop can have a positive effect on their understanding about the virus and the vaccine; and we hope we can ease their fear to change their minds.”

ElderSource has been fortunate to receive significant funding from state and federal sources to promote the importance of getting the vaccine, said ElderSource CEO Linda Levin. “These workshops are a vital piece in providing timely and accurate information to the community,” Levin said.

***For more information, or to schedule a workshop, call AHEC at 1-888-784-8486.***

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***About AHEC***

*The Northeast Florida Area Health Education Center is part of a national network of more than 300 organizations whose mission is to enhance access to quality healthcare, including preventative and primary care, by improving the supply and distribution of healthcare professionals through strategic partnerships with academic programs, communities and professional organizations.*

***About ElderSource***

*ElderSource is a local nonprofit organization designated by the state as the Area Agency on Aging and Aging and Disability Resource Center for Northeast Florida. The agency provides information and referral resources for caregivers and seniors in Northeast Florida, reaching more than 12,000 people in its seven-county service area --- Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, St. Johns and Volusia. Programs and services are funded by federal, state and local grants as well as private donations and endowments.*