



MEDIA RELEASE

KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KCHD resumes #WeCanForLeeann campaign

Effort, in memory of beloved wife, mother, created to promote flu vaccination

Knoxville, Tenn. – The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) has resumed its annual #WeCanForLeeann campaign, which is aimed at promoting flu vaccination. In 2014 Don Samples tragically lost his wife of 22 years, Leeann, to the flu. After her death, he sought to honor her memory by encouraging friends, family and the community to do the one thing she didn't – get a flu vaccine.

"After we lost Leeann, I wanted to do something to celebrate her, and I wanted another way for our daughters to remember their mom," said Don Samples. "Since her birthday was October 29, which is during flu season, it just seemed like a good idea to ask people to get their flu shot in her honor. The effort has grown every year, and in 2016 I reached out to the health department to see if they would partner with us. And that's what brought us to where we are today."

The community is encouraged to post a photo on social media after getting the flu vaccine with the hashtag #WeCanForLeeann. Sample posts include:

- "I got my flu shot today. It's the best way to protect yourself and loved ones from the flu. #WeCanForLeeann"
- "I'm fighting flu with vaccination, and I hope you will too. #WeCanForLeeann"

More information, including a short film, about Don and Leeann as well as the annual campaign is available at knoxcounty.org/health/WeCanForLeeann.

Flu vaccination has been shown to reduce the risk of flu illness, and a growing body of evidence supports that vaccination also reduces the risk of serious flu outcomes that can result in hospitalization and even death.

High-dose vaccines, recommended for those 65 years and older, are available at all [three KCHD locations](#). FluMist, for those ages 2-49, is also available. The standard injectable vaccine has not arrived at KCHD from distributors; KCHD will offer it at all three locations when it is delivered. Appointments at KCHD's Dameron Ave. and Teague clinic locations are recommended by calling 865-215-5070. Walk-in appointments are preferred at KCHD's West Clinic. Standard injectable flu vaccinations are already available in the community at medical providers and pharmacies.

Vaccination is particularly important for those with a higher risk for complications, including children younger than 5, and especially those under 2; people age 65 and older; pregnant women; and people with certain



chronic conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease and asthma. Symptoms of influenza can include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, runny nose, tiredness, diarrhea and vomiting. Those with a high risk for complications should see their health care provider if they experience any of these symptoms. Antiviral drugs may be prescribed and can reduce the severity and duration of illness. Treatment with antivirals works best when started within 48 hours of the beginning of symptoms.

About Knox County Health Department

The first health department in Tennessee to achieve national voluntary accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. As a chief health strategist for the community and with more than 260 employees, KCHD's broad scope of work includes convening partners to improve community health, identifying community health threats, investigating disease outbreaks, conducting extensive outreach and education, preparing for public health emergencies, providing and connecting the public with medical care, enforcing food safety and air quality laws, and more. For more information, visit www.knoxcounty.org/health.

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