



For Immediate Release
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Regional Senior Living Organization Receives First Doses of COVID-19 Vaccine

Chelsea, MI/Grand Rapids, MI, Jan. 13, 2021 – The COVID-19 pandemic has been especially difficult and deadly for older adults and direct care workers, but this week brought a ray of hope to those at United Methodist Retirement Communities (UMRC) & Porter Hills. More than 1,000 UMRC & Porter Hills residents and team members received their first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, with vaccine clinics kicking off on December 29, 2020 at Porter Hills Green House® Homes and January 4, 2021 at Porter Hills Village in Grand Rapids, and January 8 at Chelsea Retirement Community in Chelsea, Michigan.

Vaccines were provided on-site by CVS Pharmacy for team members and residents of UMRC & Porter Hills' skilled nursing and assisted living centers.

“So many of us long to share hugs and be close to our loved ones, and receiving the vaccine is a critical first step,” said UMRC & Porter Hills President and CEO Steve Fetyko. “The vaccine offers us all an opportunity to be part of ending this pandemic.”

To help protect independent living residents, UMRC & Porter Hills, in partnership with the Washtenaw County Health Department, set up a vaccine clinic for independent living residents ages 65+ from The Cedars of Dexter, The Pines, and Chelsea Retirement Community on January 11. Similarly, UMRC & Porter Hills is setting up clinics, in conjunction with CVS Pharmacy, for independent living residents of Porter Hills Village and Cook Valley Estates in the coming weeks.

Fetyko acknowledged the work of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the county health departments, and CVS Pharmacy in making the vaccines available. “We are continuing to partner with them as we seek to gain access to the vaccine for all of our communities and locations. We are extremely fortunate to have vaccine administration run so smoothly at UMRC & Porter Hills. So far, 75 percent of our locations and communities have had the opportunity for vaccinations, and we continue to seek solutions for the remaining 25 percent of the older adults we serve.”

Chelsea Retirement Community resident Mary Lee Rosen said, “This has been the greatest news for over nine months!”

“It felt like Christmas morning,” said Wendy Brightman, President of UMRC Foundation and Porter Hills Foundation. “There was so much emotion and eagerness among our residents and our outstanding team members who have worked so hard these last ten months to keep everyone as safe and healthy as possible.”

UMRC & Porter Hills Vice President of Operations, Nicole Maag agreed.

“There has been such a sense of hope, joy, and excitement as we rolled out the vaccination clinics,” Maag said. “Our residents and teams have been through so much these past ten months and have shown amazing resilience. The arrival of this vaccine is the best possible way to start the New Year.”

For more information, visit umrc.com or porterhills.org.

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*Building on a foundation of 165 years of combined service to older adults, **United Methodist Retirement Communities (UMRC) & Porter Hills** is a faith-based, nonprofit organization whose mission is: Welcoming all, partnering together, enriching lives. Its vision is: A world in which all are empowered to age well. Together, UMRC & Porter Hills represents the second largest nonprofit senior living organization in Michigan. With a tradition of exceptional quality and a commitment to cutting-edge care, UMRC & Porter Hills and its affiliates combine to serve approximately 6,000 older adults each year, from 24 locations and service lines, across 22 counties in Michigan’s lower peninsula. umrc.com/734.433.1000 and porterhills.org/616.949.4975*