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**Georgia Disability Organizations Thank Governor for Expanding  
COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility**

The Georgia Down Syndrome Consortium is pleased with Georgia Governor Brian Kemp's announcement that parents of children with complex medical conditions and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including Down syndrome, and their caregivers will be eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine beginning March 8, 2021.

In December, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) added those with Down syndrome to the list of People with Certain Medical Conditions at increased risk of severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19. A recent Science Magazine report suggests that people with Down syndrome are five times more likely to be hospitalized with severe illness and ten times more likely to die from complications from COVID-19. David Tolleson, Executive Director of Roswell, GA – based National Down Syndrome Congress, adds, "We know that adults with I/DD are at much higher risk for hospitalization and death due to COVID-19; therefore, protecting their caregivers must also be a priority. Including them in the Governor's new immunization plan will reduce the strain on our overburdened healthcare system and is sound public health policy."

We are grateful to Governor Kemp and Public Health Director Dr. Kathleen Toomey and appreciate their commitment to prioritizing individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their caregivers in the state vaccine allocation plan. We expect that they will continue to prioritize individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their caregivers and that they will remain in a high priority category of the state vaccine allocation plan. Those eligible can sign up to receive their vaccine beginning Friday, February 26, 2021, at [www.MyVaccineGeorgia.com](http://www.MyVaccineGeorgia.com).

The advocacy work of organizations, families, and individuals not only in Georgia but across the nation who provided stories, wrote letters, and answered Action Alerts is to be commended.

[The Georgia Down Syndrome Consortium](#) (GDSC) was formed in 2018 for like-minded organizations to work together to serve the Down syndrome community - because we're all better together! The GDSC is comprised of Adult Disability Medical Healthcare (ADMH), Down Syndrome Association of Atlanta (DSAA), GiGi's Playhouse – Atlanta, National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC), and The Down Syndrome Clinic at Emory.

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