Statement on COVID-19 Booster for Immunocompromised Cancer Patients

Last week, the FDA approved, and the CDC recommended a COVID-19 booster for immunocompromised cancer patients. This morning, Dr. Karen E. Knudsen, CEO of the American Cancer Society and American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, issued the following statement:

“Evidence shows that cancer patients who may be immunocompromised are at higher risk of contracting COVID-19 and have increased risk of serious complications.

As an organization dedicated to improving the lives of cancer patients and their families, the American Cancer Society strongly supports efforts to protect and improve the health and well-being of our community. Early data clearly demonstrate that immunocompromised individuals may not develop the same level of protection from vaccination as the general public. Given that this applies to a critical subset of cancer patients, the American Cancer Society supports the CDC recommendation and highly encourages cancer patients to talk with their doctors about whether a booster dose is right for them.

We continue to encourage everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated, including cancer patients and caregivers in consultation with their health care providers, along with continued use of masks while we are seeing so many areas with high levels of community transmission.

While breakthrough infections are rare among vaccinated individuals, they may be more likely to occur in immunocompromised individuals. Getting vaccinated is one way of helping to protect people living with cancer in your community and other immunocompromised individuals.”