

Mississippi State Health Department begins new program Shots At The Shops

Salons and barbershops are being recruited to share information on COVID-19 Vaccination

JACKSON, Miss. (WLBT) - Barbershops and salons have a special place in most communities, and now the State Health Department is hoping they will help convince more people to get the COVID vaccination with a new initiative called Shots at the Shop.



The statewide initiative is recruiting salons and barbershop owners to help spread accurate information on COVID-19 vaccination. (WLBT)

Now that clients are back in barbershops and salons for washes, cuts, and styles, the State Health Department's Office of Preventive Health and Health Equity is starting a new program to help customers hear life-saving information about the COVID vaccination.

Dr. Victor Sutton is Director of the office. He said, "they are part of that community. We go to barbershops and hang out, just to talk and just to find out what's going on in politics, what's going on healthwise, sports, and what have you. So why not train barbers and beauty salon owners to be community health advocates."

Damion Portis, a Jackson business owner said, "with the kids, the adults, the single parents, everyone I see on a day to day basis, you see how important it is that we safeguard our health."

Barbershops and salons that participate and go through the training can earn a thousand dollars.

Dr. Sutton said, "we're looking at trying to partner with them to first give a training on what's the current information as it relates to COVID and the variant, provide a monetary stipend, and to have educational materials in their shops to share with their clients.

Portis said, “the goal is for me to play a role in being a catalyst so people can access information.”



Dr. Sutton says the plan is to sign up 500 shops around the state. (WLBT)

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“It’s really tragic to know that we have a solution out there and we have people out there for whatever reason, whether its misinformation or choosing to delay it that are missing the opportunity that impacts not only themselves but their family members,” Dr. Sutton said.

Businesses that qualify and sign up will also be asked to sponsor a vaccine event in or near their shops.

The State Department of Health is now actively recruiting salons and barbershops. To learn more about the Shots at the Shop Initiative, you can call 601-206-1010 or email vaccineevent@msdh.ms.gov.