Dear Connecticut COVID-19 Vaccine Providers,

This communication is being sent to all key contacts at provider organizations administering COVID-19 vaccine-— please read this message in its entirety. *Please feel free to share it with others in your organization who may benefit from the update. Note that all our communications are archived on our* web site.

Happy New Year! With increase in cases due to the Omicron variant we want to encourage everyone 12 and older who is eligible across Connecticut to receive a COVID-19 booster.

- **It's not too late to get your flu shot!** Connecticut flu cases haven't peaked this influenza season. The predominant stain so far this season is Type A-H3N2, accounting for 86% of all reported flu tests. There are early signs that flu vaccination uptake is down this season compared to last. Providers should continue to recommend and co-administer flu vaccine as people come in for COVID-19 boosters. Visit CT DPH Seasonal Influenza Statistics Webpage for weekly updates.

- **Please note, it is required by CDC to update your inventory daily on vaccines.gov so your clinic listings remain up to date. If you accept "all comers", confirm that you are listed as a public site so that your clinic is searchable on the site by the public.**

- Please support our outreach efforts – reach out to your patients and communities! The Public Health Communications Collaborative's Updated toolkit on COVID-19 Booster Dose Messaging and Outreach Tools may be helpful in these endeavors.

- If you are able, please increase your capacity to provide vaccines, by hosting additional clinics, engaging vaccinators, etc., and reach out to the Immunization Program if there's anything we can do to help!

- Remember if you want to refer patients out for COVID-19 vaccination, information is on our web site here.

If you have COVID-19 vaccination information posted on your websites, please make sure it is up to date with all the latest recommendations. Additionally, please be sure your scheduled clinics and any other general COVID-19 information also remains up to date.

UPDATES

Updated COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations

- CDC recommends [Staying Up to Date with vaccines](#) by getting additional doses of vaccine when eligible for optimal protection against COVID-19.

- Staying up to date means that people should receive all COVID-19 vaccine doses they are eligible for at the appropriate intervals, which includes [additional doses](#) for individuals who are immunocompromised and [booster doses](#). This ensures that an individual has the highest level of protection against the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

- At this time the technical definition of "fully vaccinated" – two doses of an mRNA vaccine or one dose of the J&J vaccine – has not changed. Individuals are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after they have received their primary series.

- [Children ages 5–11 with a weakened immune system](#) can get an *additional dose* (3rd dose) of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine 28 days after their second shot.

- Now [everyone 12 and older should get a booster](#) if they are eligible for the best possible protection against Omicron.

- Anyone who received a [Pfizer or Moderna primary series should get a booster 5 months after](#) their second shot.

- FDA's [chart](#) can be useful for helping patients understand when and which boosters are eligible.

Recent Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWRs)

- Effectiveness of BNT162b2 (Pfizer-BioNTech) mRNA Vaccination Against Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children Among Persons Aged 12–18 Years — United States, July–December 2021. Link [here](#).

- Risk for Newly Diagnosed Diabetes >30 Days After SARS-CoV-2 Infection Among Persons Aged <18 years — United States, March 1, 2020–June 28, 2021. Link [here](#).

- Risk Factors for Severe COVID-19 Outcomes Among Persons Aged ≥18 Years Who Completed a Primary COVID-19 Vaccination Series — 465 Health Care Facilities, United States, December 2020–October 2021. Link [here](#).

- Receipt of COVID-19 Vaccine During Pregnancy and Preterm or Small-for-Gestational-Age at Birth — Eight Integrated Health Care Organizations, United States, December 15, 2020–July 22, 2021. Link [here](#).

- Characteristics and Clinical Outcomes of Children and Adolescents Aged <18 Years Hospitalized with COVID-19 — Six Hospitals, United States, July–August 2021. Link [here](#).

- Interim Estimate of Vaccine Effectiveness of BNT162b2 (Pfizer-BioNTech) Vaccine in Preventing SARS-CoV-2 Infection Among Adolescents Aged 12–17 Years — Arizona, July–December 2021. Link [here](#).

- COVID-19 Vaccine Safety in Children Aged 5–11 Years — United States, November 3–December 19, 2021. Link [here](#).

REMINDERS

We are keeping information on many important reminders from past communications in the space below. To prevent this section from becoming too lengthy, what remains is selected carefully. All past communications are available here.

Transition to new Adult Pfizer Tris-Sucrose Formulation	CDC is transitioning to a new Pfizer adolescent/adult formulation beginning mid-December (click here for side by side comparison). The new formulation: • **Does not require diluent** for mixing at administration sites; • May be stored at 2-8°C (36-46°F) for up to 10-weeks; • **Should never be stored at standard freezer temperatures**; • Direct shipped vaccine from Pfizer will have a **minimum dose order of 300**; • Can be used on **individuals 12 years of age and older**; and • The vials will have a **gray cap**; • As required by CDC, Connecticut will distribute all existing PBS formulations (1170 and 450 dose packs) to providers prior to distributing the new Tris Sucrose Adult formulation. • To avoid mistakes during this period of transition when both products may be in circulation, these products should not be offered/administered at the same time (same clinic).
Pfizer 6hr Label Correction	Some labels for the Pfizer pediatric products read discard after 6 hours post dilution. This information is outdated. The FDA approved the vaccine for discarding 12 hours after dilution. This updated information is printed in the EUA and Fact Sheets as follows: *"After dilution, the vial should be held between 2°C to 25°C (35°F to 77°F). Vials should be discarded 12 hours after dilution. Vial labels and cartons may state that a vial should be discarded 6 hours after the first puncture. The information in this Fact Sheet supersedes the number of hours printed on vial labels and cartons."*

How to update your information in Vaccine Finder/Vaccines.gov	COVID-19 vaccine inventory counts must be reported to Vaccine Finder daily *(required)*. **This is required, regardless of whether your clinic is set as publicly displaying or private**.
	
	• If you need to make updates to your primary point of contact for Vaccine Finder:
	   o Please update CT WiZ under: Clinic Tools – Clinic Information – Staff. Include a note in the 'comments field' of the update stating this is for a new point of contact for Vaccine Finder. Click here for the CT WiZ training.
	   o Once completed, a registration link will be sent to the new contact from the CDC. If you do not receive this link, please

email CARS_HelpDesk@cdc.gov to request they resend the registration link.

- When the primary vaccine coordinator creates their initial account in Vaccine Finder, they will be asked if they would like to report inventory: for 'all clinics' under their organization or to report 'clinics individually.'

  o If you select the option to report for 'all clinics' under your organization, only your primary vaccine coordinator contact will receive a registration link.

  o If you select the option to report 'individually', your back-up vaccine coordinator will also receive a registration link.

If you choose to publicly display your clinic on Vaccines.gov *(optional),* **please note that the shipping address listed in CT WiZ is what will be displayed on Vaccines.gov** as your clinic location. Click here for training on how to publicly display your clinic on Vaccines.gov.

Coadministration of COVID-19 and Influenza vaccines	You should administer COVID-19 and influenza vaccines without regard to timing (both live, attenuated and non-live influenza vaccines). This includes administration of COVID-19 and influenza vaccines on the same day, as well as coadministration at any time interval. (CDC | Interim Clinical Considerations: Coadministration of COVID-19 and Influenza vaccines) Tips for Communicating the Benefits of Influenza Vaccine during COVID-19
Moderna Wastage Reporting in CT WiZ (simplified)	Wastage should be calculated based on the number of people vaccinated. The information below is for a 10-dose vial, but the same logic holds for a 14-dose vial: **If 10 or fewer people are vaccinated:** • Calculate wastage as 10 minus the number of people vaccinated, regardless of whether the individuals were vaccinated with primary or booster doses. • For instance, if 10 people are given booster doses, this would be considered 0 wastage. • Similarly, if 5 people are given primary doses and 5 people are given booster doses, this is 0 wastage. **If 8 people are vaccinated,** all with primary doses, this is 2 doses wasted. If 8 people are vaccinated, 4 with primary doses and 4 with booster doses, this is also 2 doses wasted. **If >10 people are vaccinated:**

	• Because the half dose booster allows for up to 20 doses to be drawn from a vial, you will need add in extra whole doses to increase your inventory on-hand to account for the extra doses administered. This will always be considered 0 wastage.

Moderna Inventory and Booster Adjustments in CT WiZ	Your inventory on-hand will need to be adjusted <u>per vial</u> based on how many additional doses were administered. Vaccine wastage will need to be made per vial. Wastage is reported <u>in whole doses</u>.
	
	• **How to make an inventory adjustment in CT WiZ:**
	
	In CT WiZ, select Inventory – Vaccines – On-Hand – select Actions – select Adjustment:
	    • select the **Reason code**: **Dose Count Variance Multi-Dose Vial** and
	    • enter the **Doses Adjusted** *(as whole doses.)*
	
	For User Interface: How to document correct booster dosage administered in CT WiZ:
	    • In CT WiZ, find the patient – select Action – Add Vaccine – Create And Administer – Change **Dosage field** to **0.25**
	
	For EHR vendors and senders: **please be sure to include the correct dosage volume** (primary 0.5mL or add in the booster 0.25 mL) for Moderna in the HL7 message to be reported from your Electronic Health Record (EHR) system to CT WiZ.

Pfizer Expiration Extension	FDA has approved a shelf-life extension for the Pfizer Pediatric vaccine (Orange cap, 5-11 YO, diluent required) and the soon to be available Adol/Adult Tris (Gray Cap, age 12+, no diluent). This approval may be found at Healthcare Providers for 5-11 years of age, orange cap (must dilute) (fda.gov); Healthcare Providers for 12 years of age and older, gray cap (no dilution) (fda.gov)) and takes effect immediately. **This extension applies to frozen (ULT) inventories only.**

Printed Manufacturing Date	9-Month Expiry Date*
06/2021	Feb. 28, 2022
07/2021	Mar. 31, 2022
08/2021	Apr. 30, 2022
09/2021	May 31, 2022
10/2021	Jun. 30, 2022
11/2021	July. 31, 2022
12/2021	Aug. 31, 2022
01/2022	Sept. 30, 2022
02/2022	Oct. 31, 2022

	*Date of expiration always falls on the last day of the month
Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Expiration Date Extension and New Lot Numbers	FDA authorized an extension of the shelf life for certain lots of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. REMEMBER: vials must be maintained in the frozen state for the extension to be applicable (extension does not apply to thawed vials) • Look up expiration date by scanning QR code located on the carton or use the company's expiration date lookup feature on its website. • Visit CDC's Vaccine Lot Number and Expiration Date webpage and complete the registration form to request access or contact IISInfo@cdc.gov.
Report Vaccine Temperature Excursions and Wastage	**Report vaccine temperature excursions and vaccines wasted to the** Helpdesk by following the prompts and submitting a ticket. When reporting expired doses to the Helpdesk, please select the "Report Vaccine Wastage" ticket option, then select "Other" as the wastage reason and type "Expiration" in the text box when prompted. Please make sure that inventory is updated in Vaccine Finder, VAMS, or CT WiZ as appropriate.
COVID-19 SMART Health Card	The COVID-19 vaccination record SMART Health Card / QR code is available in the CT WiZ Immunization Information System (IIS) and the CT WiZ Public Portal. • Recipients can access their own records by using the CT WiZ Public Portal. For security, this public portal uses 'two-factor authentication' to verify identify. • If recipients require support with accessing their vaccination record, they can complete the online request form or call our Immunization Program phone 860-509-7929 during business hours. **For FAQs, visit:** CT WiZ Access My Immunization Record. This webpage has been updated with new FAQs about the SMART Health Card. **Tip for Clinics:** Ensuring your recipient's contact information is current at each visit **(such as cell phone and email)** will be helpful to enable recipients to access their own (or their minor child's) record in the CT WiZ Public Portal.
Replacement CDC COVID Vaccination Cards	*Recommendation*: Post your procedure for recipients to request replacement cards, in a location visible to recipients at your clinic as well as on your website. If your clinic needs additional CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Cards, contact DPH.Immunizations@ct.gov and we will email you a pdf of the

	card for your clinic to print (*note: these should not be posted on your website*). Large type print cards are also available via pdf.
Upcoming Clinic Trainings and Office Hours	• **CoVP Update** -- **next meeting this Wednesday January 12** Provides CoVP Vaccinating Providers updates on the CoVP Program and Q&A with DPH staff. **Every other Wednesday** 9-10am; Join: CoVP Office Hours • The **CoVP Enrollment Office Hours** Provides information about the CoVP enrollment process in CT WiZ and Q&A with DPH staff. **Mondays** 12-12:30pm; Join: CoVP CT WiZ Enrollment Office Hours • **Vaccine Storage and Handling Assessment** For clinics who completed CoVP enrollment and received an invite to attend. **Tuesdays** 10-11am and 1-2pm **& Thursdays** 1-2pm; **By invitation Only** • **VAMS & CT WiZ Live Helpdesk Office Hours** Clinics can ask questions about VAMS and CT WiZ functionality to DPH staff. **Tuesdays** 9-10am; Join: VAMS Live Helpdesk Office Hours Visit: VAMS Training and CT WiZ Training for enhancement release notes and training.
Ensure Best Practice by Checking CT WiZ Before Vaccinating	Prior to administering any vaccine, including the COVID-19 vaccine, it is important that a recipient's prior vaccine history be referenced in the Immunization Information System (CT WiZ); best clinical practice is to verify that the recommended interval has elapsed since a previous dose of vaccine and that the preferred brand of vaccine be administered. • If your clinic established bi-directional data exchange, you can query CT WiZ for the patient immunization record electronically from your EHR. • Every CoVP enrolled clinic can look up the patient immunization record in the CT WiZ user interface. Those who signed the CoVP Provider Agreement and the primary and back-up vaccine coordinator already have CT WiZ access. • If your staff need access to CT WiZ, request a username and select the 'Clinic Access' role. Access to CT WiZ is defined in EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 13C. • If you need support, please submit a Helpdesk ticket.
Post *Notice to Patients About Reporting to CT WiZ* at CoVP Clinics	All clinics enrolled in the CoVP must post the Notice to Patients About Reporting to CT WiZ, to let vaccine recipients know their records are being reported to CT WiZ. If you are reporting through VAMS, this data is transmitted to CT WiZ.

	• *Reminder*: DPH cannot issue a CDC card to recipients. DPH can provide the immunization record from CT WiZ upon request or recipients can access their own record in the CT WiZ Public Portal.

Resources from the CDC

- COVID-19 Pfizer Pediatric Tris-sucrose Vaccine EUA Fact Sheet for Recipients

- COVID-19 Science Brief: *Infection vs Vaccine Induced Immunity*

- New CDC Study: Vaccination Offers Higher Protection than Previous COVID-19 Infection

- Families with Vaccinated and Unvaccinated Members

- Workplace Vaccination Program

- Enroll Your Dependent in v-safe

- Product Information Guide for COVID-19 Vaccines and Ancillary Kits/Associated Products (11/3)

- The Ancillary Redistribution Gadget for Healthcare (ARGH) Tool a tool to assist providers redistributing vaccines to other CoVP clinics to identify the number of ancillary kit items needed to pack based on the number of requested doses (11/4)

- COVID-19 Vaccine Effectiveness Research

- COVID-19 Vaccines for People with Disabilities

- Vaccine Administration Resource Library | CDC Includes information Vaccine administration e-learn with CE for pharmacists, infographics for identifying injection sites, short video demonstration injection and holding children.

- Pinkbook: Vaccine Administration | CDC includes strategies to decrease anxiety and procedural pain.

- Clinical Considerations: Vaccinating Adolescents at COVID-19 Vaccine Webinar Series | CDC. There will be a similar one for younger children posted soon.

- COVID-19 clinical materials, including product-specific trainings, guidance and infographics, are here: COVID-19 Vaccination Clinical and Professional Resources | CDC

- Quick Reference Guide

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) booster shot webpage for the public

- COCA Call: [Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccines: CDC's Recommendations for COVID-19 Vaccine Primary Series in Children 5–11 years old](#) (recording now available)

- COCA Call: [What Clinicians Need to Know about the Recent Updates to CDC's Recommendations for COVID-19 Boosters](#) (recording now available)

- [Different COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

- [COVID-19 Vaccines While Pregnant or Breastfeeding](#)

Thank you for all your ongoing work and support of our COVID-19 vaccine roll-out in Connecticut.

CT DPH Immunization Program

Main P: (860) 509-7929 | Fax: (860) 706-5429 | Email: dph.immunizations@ct.gov

Website: [CT Immunization Program](#) | [COVID-19 Vaccine Program](#)

If you would like to unsubscribe from these communications, please send an email to Dph.immunizations@ct.gov with the subject line "Unsubscribe from COVID-19 Program communications".