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Sent: Monday, September 13, 2021 11:02 AM

Subject: COVID-19 Vaccine Program (CoVP) Provider Bulletin, Week of September 13



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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 of our communications are archived on our [web site](#).

UPDATES

Booster doses

DPH continues to appreciate the work that all COVID-19 vaccine providers are doing to prepare for booster doses. We recognize it is difficult to prepare given the uncertainty regarding what the booster dose recommendation will be.

We continue to closely monitor any updates from our federal partners, and we will communicate with all of you as soon as we know more.

The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) will be meeting on September 17th to discuss the manufacturer's data regarding booster dose administration. Information about the meeting is posted [here](#). The FDA Press release is posted [here](#).

Shortly following the VRBPAC meeting, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) will meet to review the latest data on safety and immunogenicity of booster doses, and evaluate effectiveness, breakthrough infections and epidemiology data, and then make recommendations on the use of a booster dose based on these reviews. Health and Human Services continues to reference its plan for boosters at an 8-month interval, but ACIP and FDA have indicated they are considering different potential intervals and potential focus on certain sub-populations based on the review of data (e.g., long-term care facility residents, people aged 75 years and older, people aged 65 years and older, and healthcare personnel). ACIP has emphasized they will continue to follow the science, and evidence will inform decision-making.

Some CoVP providers are asking if they should start to order based on the future need for booster doses. DPH advises that you should continue to order for what you need in the immediate future – we do not anticipate supply to be scarce, and provider orders for Moderna and Pfizer vaccine during a booster campaign should be readily available. Until we know more from ACIP about which specific populations are recommended for booster doses and when, we do not recommend stockpiling vaccine, as this will incur the risk of wastage and spoilage.

FDA Statement issued from Dr. Woodcock and Dr. Marks

[FDA Will Follow The Science On COVID-19 Vaccines For Young Children](#) September 10

Janssen J&J vaccine ordering

J&J vaccine became available for ordering on Friday, September 10th. CDC has stated there is no shortage of doses, so we ask that all providers only request what is needed for the near future. Please note that the minimum ordering quantity for a direct shipment of J&J vaccine is 100 doses. Orders less than this amount will be filled via in-state transfer and expiration dates may be shorter than what is available by direct shipment. Additionally, all providers should update their inventory on [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov). CDC has expressed that requests for J&J order fulfillment may be impacted at the federal level by the reported inventory.

Recent updates to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Communication and Education Product Inventory

- [Vaccinate with Confidence COVID-19 Vaccines Strategy](#)
- [How to Address COVID-19 Vaccine Misinformation](#)
- [Clinical Care Considerations for COVID-19 Vaccination](#)
- [Myocarditis and Pericarditis Following mRNA COVID-19 Vaccination](#)

Recent COVID-19 and vaccine related publications

- **Monitoring Incidence of COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths, by Vaccination Status — 13 U.S. Jurisdictions, April 4–July 17, 2021**
- **Interim Estimates of COVID-19 Vaccine Effectiveness Against COVID-19–Associated Emergency Department or Urgent Care Clinic Encounters and Hospitalizations Among Adults During SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617.2 (Delta) Variant Predominance — Nine States, June–August 2021**
- **Effectiveness of COVID-19 mRNA Vaccines Against COVID-19–Associated Hospitalization — Five Veterans Affairs Medical Centers, United States, February 1–August 6, 2021**

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](#).

Pfizer Ordering Cadence: Update

The Pfizer ordering cadence is changing from a 1-day to a 3-day window, as indicated in the table below.

Order Placed by DPH to CDC by 9 AM ET Cutoff	Site Receives Ancillary Kit	Site Vaccine Delivery Window
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday–Friday
Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday–Monday
Wednesday	Thursday	Friday–Tuesday
Thursday	Friday	Monday–Wednesday
Friday	Monday	Tuesday–Thursday

Medicare COVID-19 Vaccination for Residents of Small Long-Term Care Facilities

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is expanding opportunities for people to receive COVID-19 vaccinations in their home. To ensure Medicare beneficiaries who have difficulty leaving their homes or are otherwise hard-to-reach can receive the vaccination, providers can now receive additional payments for administering vaccines to multiple residents in one home setting or communal setting of a home. For additional information, please see the [press release](#) CMS sent out about this announcement.

Influenza Corner

A [new CDC study](#) shows that early flu antiviral treatment was associated with significantly shorter hospitalizations in children.

Additionally, the following are reminders about important influenza-related events coming up. Put these dates on your calendar to keep up with flu over the course of the 2021-2022 influenza season.

- September 9 (recording will be available): [Webinar September 9, 2021 - 2021-2022 Influenza Vaccination Recommendations and Guidance on Coadministration with COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- October 7: [National Foundation for Infectious Disease press conference launch](#)
- October 7: 2021-2022 Recommendations for Influenza Prevention and Treatment in Children: An Update for Pediatric Providers (we will share link once available)
- October 12: [Ad Council campaign](#) launch
- October 15: [Weekly FluView Reports](#) for 2021-2022 begin

FAQ Videos About the COVID-19 Vaccines & Children

THE CONVERSATION / LA CONVERSACIÓN expands to address [the COVID-19 vaccines and children](#) with new FAQ videos featuring pediatricians. Pediatricians Answer Questions About Kids & the COVID-19 Vaccines, presented with the American Academy of Pediatrics. Comedian and TV host, **W. Kamau Bell** returns to ask the questions that many parents and caregivers have about the vaccine in a launch video for the series. Materials available [here](#).

Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) and Pfizer Vaccine

The FDA Provider and Recipient/Caregiver Fact Sheets have been updated following the FDA's approval of a Biologics License Application (BLA) for Pfizer's COMIRNATRY (COVID-19 Vaccine, mRNA). The BLA approval is for adults 16 years and older and EUA for adolescents will continue to cover adolescents ages 12 years of age through 15 years of age. At this time, it has been decided to continue using the EUA Fact Sheet format in the near term instead of a VIS document. The [FDA amendments and BLA documents](#) for Pfizer have been updated as of 8/23/2021.

CT WiZ Immunization Public Portal is live

- Vaccine recipients can now access immunization records through the secure [CT WiZ Public Portal](#), a free service provided by the CT DPH Immunization Program. A press release can be found [here](#).
- Vaccine recipients and legal guardians can access official immunization records for themselves and their children if they are under the age of 18 using the CT WiZ Public Portal with 'two-factor authentication' to verify identity.
- Recipients won't find the record if the contact information does not match what the provider reported to CT WIZ. If they are unable to locate their record in the portal, they can contact the DPH Immunization Program for assistance ([helpdesk](#) or phone: 860-509-7929 during business hours Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm).

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**.

Clinics using VAMS must take the following steps to enable recipients to schedule an additional dose per the ACIP recommendation for the immune compromised.

- Go to the **Clinic Setup** tab and scroll to the **Clinic Location** window
- Click **Clinic Name** hyperlink and click **Edit** and scroll to **Vaccine Products Carried** window
- Check the **Additional Dose** box

Coadministration of COVID-19 and Influenza vaccines

You may 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)

With influenza season approaching, CDC recognizes there may be compelling logistical advantages to offering patients COVID-19 and influenza vaccines on the same day, and you may encourage patients to receive these on the same day. There are no safety concerns for coadministration.

When deciding whether to coadminister another vaccine(s) with COVID-19 vaccine, consider:

- Whether the patient is behind or at risk of becoming behind on recommended vaccines;
- The patient's risk of vaccine-preventable disease;
- The reactogenicity profile of the vaccines;
- The likelihood of avoiding a missed opportunity to vaccinate.

Best practices for multiple injections include:

- Label each syringe with the name and the dosage (amount) of the vaccine, lot number, the initials of the preparer, and the exact beyond-use time, if applicable.
- Separate injection sites by 1 inch or more, if possible.
- Administer the COVID-19 vaccines and vaccines that may be more likely to cause a local reaction (i.e., adjuvanted influenza vaccines) in different limbs, if possible.

COVID-19 Vaccine Ordering

- Pfizer trays of 450 are no longer available for direct shipment. All Pfizer orders placed this week for direct shipment will be 1170. Changes have been made in the ordering portal to reflect this. CoVP providers can continue to place orders of any quantity in our ordering portal, as long as it is in multiples of the vial size for the appropriate product. Any orders that are less than the minimum shipment size will be filled by in-state transfer.

Report vaccine temperature excursions and vaccines wasted to the [Helpdesk](#) by following the prompts and submitting a ticket.

- Immediately report all temperature excursions in storage units containing COVID-19 vaccines. Staff will be notified in real time of the excursion and will assist you. Please store vaccines in the storage unit in a paper bag marked "do not use" until a determination about the viability of the vaccine has been made, in consultation with the manufacturer and the Immunization Program.
- Also report to the Helpdesk all COVID-19 vaccines deemed wasted or expired. This includes Pfizer vials from which a sixth dose cannot be extracted.

Reminder: Check your vaccine listing

Please check that your clinic is properly listed at ct.gov/covidvaccine. Please send an email with any updates, corrections, or additions to Caroline.Hou@ct.gov.

COVID-19 Vaccine and Pregnancy

The increased circulation of the highly contagious [Delta variant](#), the [low vaccine uptake among pregnant people](#), and the increased risk of severe illness and pregnancy complications related to COVID-19 infection among pregnant people make vaccination for this population more urgent than ever.

The CDC webpage [COVID-19 Vaccines While Pregnant or Breastfeeding](#) contains some key messages for you to share with your patients.

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.

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.
- *Reminder:* You should issue replacement CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Cards to your vaccine recipients should they request one. DPH cannot issue a card to recipients, but DPH can provide the immunization record from CT WiZ. DPH's procedure is on our COVID-19 Vaccine and DPH Immunization webpages at: [I lost my vaccine card, how do I get another one? \(ct.gov\)](#) and [Request an Official Immunization Record](#)

Resources

- [Advisory: Confronting Health Misinformation](#) *US Surgeon General*
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Equity for Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups](#) *CDC – CHEO*

Upcoming Clinic Trainings and Office Hours

- **CoVP Update -- next meeting September 22nd.**
Provides CoVP Vaccinating Providers updates on the CoVP Program and Q&A with DPH staff. **Every other Wednesday** 9:00am-10:00am; 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 & Thursdays** 12:00pm-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** 10:00am-11:00am & **Thursdays** 1:00pm-2:00pm; **By invitation Only**

- **VAMS & CT WiZ Live Helpdesk Office Hours** Clinics can ask questions about VAMS and CT WiZ functionality to DPH staff. **Tuesdays** 9:00am 10:00am; Join: [VAMS Live Helpdesk Office Hours](#)

Visit: [VAMS Training](#) and [CT WiZ Training](#) for enhancement release notes and training.

Thank you for all of 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](#)

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