

From: CT Department of Public Health <noreply-dphimmunizations@ct.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, April 6, 2021 4:15 PM

To:

Subject: COVID Vaccine Provider Bulletin – April 6, 2021



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Dear Connecticut COVID Vaccine Providers,

Thank you again for your continued efforts in the COVID Vaccine roll-out. This email contains important information for COVID vaccine providers – please read this message in its entirety.

J&J supply update

As has been publicly reported, there continue to be delays in the ramp-up of production capacity for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. None of the events reported in the media have affected any shipments that have come to Connecticut and none of the Johnson & Johnson product currently in the state is compromised in any way.

However, the State's overall Johnson & Johnson allocation for next week is significantly lower than in past weeks. Last week, the State's allocation was 53,900 doses. For next week (the week of April 12), the State's allocation will be just 6,400 doses of Johnson & Johnson. The State's allocation for future weeks could be even lower.

Most J&J orders for the upcoming week will not be able to be filled. We will work with providers to see if there are ways that alternative products that can be used, but clinic efforts that require J&J may have to be delayed.

Guidance update: Employer clinics and other closed PODs

DPH's goal is to ensure easy, equitable access to COVID 19 vaccines in line with the governor's priorities for the COVID Vaccine roll-out: averting illness and death, protecting the most vulnerable, and promoting equity.

Towards these ends, between now and April 20, closed PODs should not be held unless they specifically support the goal of reaching high-risk individuals or promoting equity. This means that use of closed PODs, special event codes, or other mechanisms that prevent the public from accessing a vaccine appointment slot should only be used if it is being done so in line with the overall goal of promoting equity or enabling access for vulnerable populations.

Closed PODs for employer groups, universities, or other organizations can be scheduled for dates after April 20. Providers who wish to hold such clinics should plan to use their baseline allocations towards these purposes unless specific accommodation and agreement with DPH has been made.

High School district and clinics

DPH is conducting outreach to local health directors and superintendents to discuss plans for potential high school clinics, with early outreach focused on Alliance Districts. Questions about high school clinics should be directed to Cameron Cross at: Cameron.Cross@ct.gov.

High school clinics will take different forms depending on the local context: in some cases, on-site clinics are being planned at each high school led by the local health department; in other a vaccine provider will be offering dedicated clinics for these students at a central location. Each district can define its own model and we will be here to support.

Expanding the COVID Vaccine provider network: Pharmacies, Primary Care & Occupational Health

The network of providers offering COVID Vaccines continues to expand. Over the past 2 weeks, roughly 100 additional pharmacies have begun to offer COVID Vaccines in Connecticut through the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program – including Rite Aid, Big Y, Price Chopper, Stop & Shop, as well as dozens of independent pharmacies across the State of Connecticut. These pharmacies join CVS, Walgreens, and Walmart who have been administering vaccine in Connecticut since January.

Primary care practices have played an important role in the COVID Vaccine roll-out since its beginning. Primary care providers are important, trusted messengers for individuals across the State, and these providers have been on the frontlines of addressing hesitancy and providing strong endorsements for COVID 19 vaccines to their patients.

DPH has begun to enroll select Primary Care and Urgent Care practices that are part of the Connecticut Vaccine Program to administer COVID Vaccines. This enrollment will expand over the next several weeks.

Occupational Health practices will also be allowed to enroll in the next several weeks. Allocation for these groups should not be expected until April 26 at the earliest.

At this time, throughput and efficiency of dose administration remains a priority for all providers – so no provider is exempt from the requirement to use all doses within 9 days of receiving shipment. As we look ahead to May, we expect for supply to exceed demand and the throughput need in primary care settings may ease and enable a broader set of practices to administer COVID vaccines as well. More information for primary care practices will be available in the next week.

Pediatric indication for COVID Vaccines

Pfizer recently announced that it would soon be submitting information to US FDA to expand the EUA for its COVID-19 vaccine to include 12-15 year-olds. It is believed that Moderna will likely follow suit soon. At this point, the precise timeline for the EUA is speculative, but this could come as soon as late May or June. We will share more information as we learn more.

There are roughly 177,000 Connecticut residents between the ages of 12-15; ensuring access to COVID vaccines for all individuals for whom the vaccines are authorized will be a critical step towards herd immunity and broader population coverage.

Second dose follow-up

Thank you to all providers for scheduling second doses at the time of the first dose and for conducting active follow up of patients overdue for second doses. Providers are asked to abide by the following procedures:

- At least three different contact attempts should be made with patients before considering them lost to follow up
- Contact attempts should include multiple different media. For example, phone call, text and email

DPH is monitoring second timeliness and completion rates by provider and will be following up with providers who are lagging on second dose completion.

Reminder: Do not schedule first dose appointments after May 2

Providers should not be scheduling first dose appointments any later than May 2 – please wait for more information about when to extend schedules beyond May 2. There are limited exceptions to this rule (such as the FEMA mobile unit or college & university clinics scheduled after May 2).

Reminder: Check your listing

Providers are reminded to check their listing at covidvaccinefinder.ct.gov. If any corrections are needed, please email Caroline.Hou@ct.gov

Reminder: Equity Partnership grants available to Local Health Departments

All local health departments received information this week about the Vaccine Equity Partnerships Funding program grants. These grants provide non-competitive funding for supporting outreach for equity efforts at the local level. Local Health Departments have been asked to collaborate with other Vaccine Providers as well as community organizations to develop strong equity partnerships working together to ensure vaccine access for all residents in high SVI areas and those disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

Questions about Equity Partnership Grants should be directed to DPH.VEPFInbox@ct.gov.

Thank you for everything that you are doing to ensure access to COVID Vaccines for individuals across the State of Connecticut!

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