

## **COVID Vaccine Provider Bulletin**

**Week of July 19, 2021**

Dear Connecticut COVID-19 Vaccine Providers,

Thank you again for your continued efforts in the COVID Vaccine roll-out. This email contains important information for COVID-19 vaccine providers – please read this message in its entirety.

### **UPDATES**

#### **Vaccine safety and [Guillain-Barré Syndrome \(GBS\)](#)**

The following information is shared on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [vaccine safety page](#): The CDC and the FDA are monitoring reports of [Guillain-Barré Syndrome \(GBS\)](#) in people who have received the J&J/Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine. GBS is a rare disorder where the body's immune system damages nerve cells, causing muscle weakness and sometimes paralysis. Most people fully recover from GBS, but some have permanent nerve damage. After 12.8 million J&J/Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine doses administered, there have been around 100 preliminary reports of GBS identified in VAERS. These cases have largely been reported about 2 weeks after vaccination and mostly in men, many 50 years and older. CDC will continue to monitor for and evaluate reports of GBS occurring after COVID-19 vaccination and will share more information as it becomes available. The FDA also included GBS info in a [news brief](#).

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) will be convening to discuss vaccine safety and GBS on July 22, 2021, 11 am – 4:00 pm.

[Draft Agenda – July 22, 2021](#)

[Webcast Link.](#)

#### **Thermal shippers and Pfizer vaccine**

Pfizer is running short of COVID-19 vaccine shipper boxes and Controlant temperature monitors because of the smaller packaging (450 doses vs 1170 doses) requires more shipper boxes and Controlant temperature monitors to deliver the same number of doses.

You can assist with this shortage by returning your shippers and Controlant temperature monitors as soon as possible. Please check the shippers to verify they are completely empty before returning them. Please do not return vaccine or ancillary products in the shippers.

#### **Recent COVID-19 vaccine related publications**

[Acceptability of Adolescent COVID-19 Vaccination Among Adolescents and Parents of Adolescents — United States, April 15–23, 2021](#)

[SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617.2 \(Delta\) Variant COVID-19 Outbreak Associated with a Gymnastics Facility — Oklahoma, April–May 2021](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage Among Insured Persons Aged ≥16 Years, by Race/Ethnicity and Other Selected Characteristics — Eight Integrated Health Care Organizations, United States, December 14, 2020–May 15, 2021](#)

**JAMA Network Publication - Mandatory SARS-CoV-2 Vaccinations in K-12 Schools, Colleges/Universities, and Businesses:** [Mandatory vaccination has historically served as a tool to reach and sustain high immunization coverage and to prevent transmission in K-12 schools, colleges/universities, and health care facilities.](#)

**Grant Opportunity: [Promoting Vaccine Confidence in Local Communities through Partnership with Regional Health Offices](#)**

Federal Health and Human Services (HHS) announced a Notice of Funding Opportunity that provides funding for eligible organizations to establish partnerships with community stakeholders to increase vaccine confidence among populations with low vaccination rates for children and adults, including rural and under-resourced communities. (This is not limited to Covid vaccine.)

Eligible organizations include but are not limited to: state and local governments, community and faith-based organizations, businesses, American Indian/Alaska Native/Native American organizations, and any other organizations serving under-vaccinated and under-resourced communities, as well as minority-serving or other organizations--including public health departments, community organizations, academic institutions, professional or trade organizations, and immunization coalitions--that work with populations with low vaccination rates (e.g., African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asians, people living with disabilities, etc.).

As part of our ongoing work to advance vaccine equity, DPH would like to encourage Connecticut-based applicants for this funding opportunity. Questions about the grant can be directed to Betsy Rosenfeld at [betsy.rosenfeld@hhs.gov](mailto:betsy.rosenfeld@hhs.gov).

**Technical Assistance Webinar: Thursday July 22, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. EDT. Login details will be posted [here](#). Closing Date: Aug. 17, 2021.**

**CDC COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force maintains a Communication and Education Product Inventory**

[Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccination](#)

[Key Things to Know About COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

[Resources for Jurisdictions, Clinics, and Organizations](#)

[S. COVID-19 Vaccination Program: Vaccine Channel Portfolio by Jurisdiction](#)

[About the National Forum on COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

[Resources Page](#)

[GBS FAQ - Public Health Communication Collaborative](#)

**The COVID-19 Vaccination Community Features**

One way CDC is contributing to vaccination efforts is by promoting the work happening in communities across the country through [COVID-19 Vaccine Community Features](#). Each week CDC will feature stories that celebrate the people behind the vaccination program and give other communities ideas to improve their programs. Send stories you would like us to feature to [ISDcomm@cdc.gov](mailto:ISDcomm@cdc.gov). Include “CVCF Submission” in the subject, a summary of your story, and contact information. We will review the suggestion and send follow up instructions.

## **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](#).

### **Updates regarding vaccine authorization**

**Moderna adolescent EUA:** The Moderna Adolescent EUA for vaccinating adolescents aged 12 through 17 against COVID-19 is expected in **mid- to late July**.

**Boosters:** No boosters are recommended at this time. You can see a recent joint statement from the CDC and FDA [here](#). CDC stated efforts will continue to document how well COVID-19 vaccines are working including the protection they offer against new COVID-19 variants. Studies are ongoing to determine whether or when boosters shots may be needed, but currently, there are not enough data available to support the recommendation of boosters. More information is available from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices from the June meeting [here](#).

**Pfizer approval:** Pfizer is seeking full FDA approval for its COVID-19 vaccine. A decision is not expected until after August.

### **The federal public health emergency declaration will likely be in place through 2024**

The attached letter, signed by CDC COVID-19 Emergency Response leadership, was circulated to public health partners as a reminder that the federal public health emergency (PHE) declaration and the Declaration, as amended, authorized by the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act are still in effect and will remain in place through 2024. Qualified persons identified/covered by PREP Act to administer vaccines will still be covered regardless of whether a state has an emergency declaration in place.

### **Check your listing and report/ensure inventory is correct**

Please remember to check your listing at [covidvaccinefinder.ct.gov](https://covidvaccinefinder.ct.gov). Please make sure that the types of vaccines you are offering are up to date. If any corrections or updates are needed, complete the update form at: <https://uwc.211ct.org/contact/request-agency-update/>. Please also remember to update your inventory on hand daily with [VaccineFinder](#).

## **COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccination**

While it is uncertain what might happen this upcoming flu season, relaxed COVID-19 mitigation measures will likely result in the resumption of seasonal flu virus circulation. Reduced population immunity due to lack of flu virus activity since March 2020 could result in an early and possibly severe flu season. Also, co-circulation of flu, SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19), and other respiratory viruses like RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) could place a renewed high burden on the health care system.

Please remind your patients of the importance of getting an annual flu vaccine this fall.

When to Get Vaccinated -- Additional guidance around the ideal timing of vaccination for different groups of people has been proposed by ACIP for inclusion in the upcoming Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza With Vaccines: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)—United States, 2021-2022 Influenza Season. Adoption of these changes is pending approval by the CDC Director and publication in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR).

Can flu and COVID-19 vaccines be given at the same time during the upcoming fall and winter? According to CDC “COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines may be administered on the same day, as well as any interval without respect to timing”

(<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/downloads/summary-interim-clinical-considerations.pdf>).

## **Vaccine inventory and ordering**

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.

The pause on J&J shipments continues for the foreseeable future. Providers may still request doses and we will also fill those by in-state transfer as we have sufficient quantity of doses on the ground. We appreciate the assistance of COVID-19 vaccine providers across Connecticut in supporting these transfers.

## **CMS is offering *We Can Do This* COVID-19 Vaccine Campaign Toolkit Webinars**

The HHS [We Can Do This](#) campaign is a national initiative working hand in hand with trusted leaders and community organizations to continue to build confidence in COVID-19 vaccines and get more people vaccinated. This campaign offers tailored resources and toolkits for stakeholders to use to provide COVID-19 vaccine information to at-risk populations.

## **Report expired vaccine**

Please promptly report any expired vaccine to the CT WiZ [Helpdesk](#). Keep in mind that there are no negative consequences for reporting waste, and it will not negatively impact future

allocations. CT DPH recognizes that unused expired vaccine is a normal part of this phase of the vaccination program.

### **Replacement CDC COVID Vaccination Cards**

Clinics are allowed to issue replacement CDC COVID Vaccination Cards to their vaccine recipients, should they contact you when their card is lost or needs a correction. *DPH can issue the immunization record from CT WiZ, but cannot issue a card to recipients.*

If your clinic needs additional CDC COVID Vaccination Cards, contact [Immunizations@ct.gov](mailto:Immunizations@ct.gov) and we will email you a pdf of the card for your clinic to print (*note: these cannot be posted on your website.*) Large type print cards are also available, via pdf.

**CT WiZ Reports Manual** (June 2021) posted at: [CT WiZ Patient Management](#) includes a NEW Report for providers “COVID-19 Dose 1, 2, and Series Complete Report”.

### **Upcoming Clinic Trainings and Office Hours**

#### **CoVPUpdate**

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](#)

#### **CoVPCT WiZ 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 & Thursdays** 10:00am-11:00am and 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.