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Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 3:12 PM

Subject: Call to Action for Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccinators



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

November 2, 2021

Dear Connecticut Pediatricians,

I am writing to you at an exciting and important moment. This week, we expect to receive Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) authorization and recommendation for the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5 through 11. Given your commitment to providing quality care to children and families and considering all that you have weathered throughout the pandemic, I know that this is a significant moment for you.

We want to ask for your help and support in enabling your patients to access the pediatric COVID-19 vaccine. Specifically, we are asking you to recommend this vaccine to your patients and families as recommended by the CDC, to offer the vaccine in your offices, and to help guide patients to other vaccine administration locations if you are not offering the vaccine in your office.

Your recommendation to vaccinate against COVID-19

Research consistently shows that a provider's recommendation to vaccinate is the single most influential factor in parents' decisions to vaccinate their children. You are a trusted source of information, advice, and reassurance.

I ask that you use all the tools at your disposal to help families and individuals make an informed choice about receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Outreach strategies include sending emails, placing outbound phone calls, and making sure that you counsel every patient and family you see during office visits or telehealth calls about the importance of getting vaccinated.

The CDC has published information for pediatricians, and we expect these resources to be updated during the next week after the final recommendations for children 5-11 are released:

- [How to talk to parents about COVID-19 vaccination](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens](#)

Your COVID-19 vaccine delivery

Hundreds of pediatricians and practices across the State are stepping up to offer COVID-19 vaccines for children. For those of you who have not yet completed enrollment as COVID-19 vaccine providers, I want to encourage you to do so. As a reminder, the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5 through 11 can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 10 weeks, so the storage and handling burden associated with the initial adult Pfizer vaccine roll-out should be significantly alleviated.

Although it may take work to onboard your electronic health record systems (EHRs), report all vaccine doses administered, and train your staff, we believe this effort is vitally important to ensuring the health and well-being of the children and families in our state. If you are not yet enrolled as a COVID-19 vaccine provider and need any help or support, you can [register your interest here](#). If you are having problems with your enrollment, send an email to dph.immunizations@ct.gov.

Your guidance about COVID-19 vaccination

We want to make sure that all practices are ready to provide guidance and support for patients and families who are looking for COVID-19 vaccines. If you cannot provide the vaccine in your office, please make sure that the individuals answering calls to your practice are equipped with accurate information about how to direct your patients.

There will be hundreds of locations across the State of Connecticut where an individual can receive a COVID-19 vaccine. These will include pediatric offices, pharmacies, school-based clinics (including those run by school-based health centers, as well as mobile clinics conducted at schools), local health departments, hospitals, and health systems. Families can visit ct.gov/covidvaccine, type in their zip code, and see what providers locally are offering COVID-19 vaccines for children 5-11.

The network of providers offering this vaccine will continue to expand over the next several weeks, so please continue to check our website for new locations. In addition, I encourage you to take special note of what clinics, including pharmacies, in the immediate area of your practice are offering the pediatric vaccine so that you can offer specific, convenient locations for your patients if you are not providing the vaccine yourself.

Thank you for everything that you do daily to keep our children and families safe. I know that there are many competing demands on your time. Your work has made Connecticut a national leader in routine pediatric immunizations, and we appreciate everything you are doing to help ensure we vaccinate as many children as possible against COVID-19.

Respectfully,

Dr. Manisha Juthani

Commissioner, Department of Public Health

