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**Sent:** Tuesday, September 7, 2021 1:12 PM

**Subject:** COVID-19 Vaccine Program (CoVP) Provider Bulletin, Week of September 7



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**

### **Janssen J&J vaccine ordering**

The J&J vaccine has not been available for ordering from the federal government through McKesson for several months. All orders for J&J vaccine since that time have been fulfilled through transfers between CoVP providers within Connecticut. We have now exhausted nearly all supply of J&J vaccine within the state.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has indicated that J&J will be available for ordering from McKesson in limited quantities beginning this week. We will share more information when we have it, but at this time we anticipate that order sizes will not be able to exceed 200 doses per PIN.

Additionally, all providers should update their inventory on [vaccines.gov](#). CDC has expressed that requests for J&J order fulfillment may be impacted at the federal level by the reported inventory.

### **Booster Dose Updates**

- The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) will be meeting on September 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss the manufacturer's data regarding booster dose administration. Information about the meeting 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.

- We know that CoVP providers are actively planning for booster dose administration once recommended. We still do not know exactly what the booster dose recommendation will be, but will continue to provide updates as we learn more.
- 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.

**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.

<b>Order Placed by DPH to CDC by 9 AM ET Cutoff</b>	<b>Site Receives Ancillary Kit</b>	<b>Site Vaccine Delivery Window</b>
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.

## **CT WiZ Downtime**

Attention all CT WiZ users (user interface and EHR interface): on Tuesday 9/7/2021, CT WiZ will be down between 8:00 pm and 9:00 pm for a new release. Please plan your entry and electronic querying accordingly.

## **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: [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

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

- [COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage Among Adolescents Aged 12–17 Years — United States, December 14, 2020–July 31, 2021](#)
- [Association Between COVID-19 and Myocarditis Using Hospital-Based Administrative Data — United States, March 2020–January 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](#).

## **Updated Standing Orders to Support Third Doses for Immunocompromised Individuals**

[Pfizer](#) standing order for age 12 and older, updated 8/20/2021

**Moderna** standing order for age 18 and older, updated 8/20/2021

### **\*NEW\* 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.

### **Recent updates to the Communication and Education Product Inventory**

- [How to Address COVID-19 Vaccine Misinformation\\_](#)
- [Clinical Care Considerations for COVID-19 Vaccination \\_](#)
- [Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Overview and Safety\\_](#)
- [COVID-19 Janssen Vaccine EUA Fact Sheet for Recipients \\_](#)
- [COVID-19 Moderna Vaccine EUA Fact Sheet for Recipients\\_](#)
- [CDC CVRS – What's New in Version 3 for Jurisdictions & Federal Partners\\_](#)
- [U.S. COVID-19 Vaccination Program: Vaccine Channel Portfolio by Jurisdiction\\_](#)

### **CT WiZ Immunization Public Portal is now 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](#).

### **Vaccine mandates**

Governor Lamont announced that he has issued an [executive order](#) requiring that all Connecticut state employees and staff of all childcare facilities and preK-12 schools statewide must have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by September 27, 2021. Those who do not get vaccinated due to certain exemptions will be required to be tested for COVID-19 on a weekly basis. However, state hospital and long-term care employees will not have the option of being tested in lieu of vaccination.

**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](https://ct.gov/covidvaccine). Please send an email with any updates, corrections, or additions to [Caroline.Hou@ct.gov](mailto: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](mailto: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 8<sup>th</sup>.**  
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.

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