

December 7, 2020

Dear Howard County Healthcare Provider:

The State of Maryland has learned that shipment of SARS-CoV-2 vaccine may begin shortly after vaccine is authorized by the FDA. The two vaccines expected to be shipped first are manufactured by Pfizer and Moderna. Both require 2 doses: the Pfizer vaccine at three weeks apart and the Moderna vaccine at four weeks apart. Initial vaccine supply will be very limited and insufficient to vaccinate everyone who wants to be vaccinated. Groups will be prioritized based upon the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and State recommendations.

On December 1, 2020 at a meeting of the ACIP, the following groups were recommended to be prioritized to receive vaccine in Phase 1a.

- Health care personnel – paid and unpaid persons serving in healthcare settings with potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials
- Residents of long-term care facilities - adults who reside in facilities that provide medical and personal care to persons unable to live independently

Healthcare personnel employed by hospitals and nursing homes will receive vaccination at their places of employment. Other healthcare personnel will receive vaccine through public health clinics.

To help the Howard County Health Department (HCHD) with planning and preparation of healthcare worker clinics, please complete a brief survey so we have your contact information, type of practice, and estimated number of staff to be vaccinated. This information will be used to provide you with vaccine clinic registration details once vaccine is available. Registration at these clinics will be required and will occur via PrepMod (<https://www.marylandvax.org/>).

Kindly click on the following link to complete the survey.  
([https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/COVID\\_Vaccine1\\_MedFacilities](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/COVID_Vaccine1_MedFacilities)).

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**Maura J. Rossman, M.D., Health Officer**

Please begin thinking about the following to better prepare your practice and staff for vaccination:

- Avoid vaccinating entire workforce at same time due to potential adverse effects and need for staff to take sick leave as a result.
- Sub-prioritize employees based upon occupational risk (not personal risk).
- Schedule second dose at time of first appointment for adherence and maximum efficacy.

Once vaccine is widely available (Phase 2), Marylanders will be able to receive vaccinations through their health care provider or at a pharmacy (similar to the flu shot). Providers who want to receive vaccine directly to immunize patients must register with ImmuNet at [www.mdimmunet.org](http://www.mdimmunet.org).

There are still many unknowns and plans will adapt as more details become available. Updated vaccine information will be posted on the Health Department COVID-19 vaccine information page at <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Health/MM-Alerts-and-Recalls/COVID-19-Vaccine>. This has been a tough year, with some rough months ahead. However, with vaccine on the horizon, I am hopeful for better times.

Thank you,

Maura J. Rossman MD  
Health Officer

Att: FAQ