



Office of the Health Officer
8930 Stanford Blvd | Columbia, MD 21045
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Maura J. Rossman, M.D., Health Officer

December 21, 2020

Dear Howard County Behavioral Health Provider:

Shipment of SARS-CoV-2 vaccine has begun to hospitals and nursing homes in Maryland. There are two authorized vaccines, one manufactured by Pfizer, and the other manufactured by Moderna. Both are mRNA vaccines with excellent efficacy and safety profiles. Both require 2 doses: the Pfizer vaccine at three weeks apart and the Moderna vaccine at four weeks apart.

During Phase 1a, 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. 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
- First Responders

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. Kindly click on the following link to complete the survey:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/COVID_Vaccine_MedFacilities2.

Preregistration at these clinics will be required and will occur via PrepMod (<https://www.marylandvax.org/>). You will be notified by email when registration is open. It is important you share this information with your staff as the registration period will be brief.



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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.

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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Maura J. Rossman MD'.

Maura J. Rossman MD
Health Officer