



To: CAHAN San Diego Participants
Date: February 2, 2021
From: Public Health Services

Health Advisory Update #25: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Vaccine Updates

Key Messages

- Due to limited vaccine supply, approved dose allocation may not reflect the amount requested by providers.
- The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and County of San Diego have clarified [priority groups](#) to receive COVID-19 vaccine in Phase 1A. Prioritized persons include formal and *informal* caregivers to elderly and people with disabilities. Guidance is provided below on further specifics for these caregivers.
- Providers should monitor the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [Clinical Considerations webpage](#) for frequently updated national guidance on COVID-19 vaccination.
- A recent poll of San Diego residents highlights the critical role physicians, nurses, and medical researchers play as trusted messengers of information and guidance on COVID-19 vaccination.
- Resources and materials are available [locally](#) and from CDC for providers to use while engaging with patients on COVID vaccination, such as the [Talking to Recipients about COVID-19 Vaccines webpage](#) and Vaccination Communication and Recipient Education Toolkits [for healthcare facilities and providers](#).

Situation

- **Limited Vaccine Supply**
 - Provider participation in the COVID-19 Vaccination Program is greatly appreciated as a vital service to public health. Requests for vaccine are reviewed and doses are being allocated as they become available. Unfortunately, the amount allocated to the region by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is far less than what was requested by local providers. Due to limited vaccine supply, approved allocations may not reflect the amount requested by providers. All requests are reviewed and vaccine is distributed with a focus on health equity and in line with recommendations set forth by the County's [Covid-19 Vaccine Clinical Advisory Group](#). The County of San Diego (County) thanks all providers for their continued support in immunizing San Diegans with COVID-19 vaccines. The County intends to fulfill requests for vaccines as soon as supply is available from the state.
- **Documentation at Vaccination Sites**
 - Vaccine eligibility currently includes healthcare personnel (Phase 1A, Tiers 1-3) and those aged [65 years and older](#) (Phase 1B, Tier 1).
 - CDPH has identified [additional Phase 1A priority groups](#) to receive COVID-19 vaccine. This includes both *formal* and *informal* caregivers to elderly and people with disabilities.
 - When **formal caregivers**, including private duty caregivers, present for vaccination, documentation like paystubs or timesheets from their employer or in-home supportive services AND a photo ID should be accepted as proof of eligibility.
 - Informal caregivers are [defined](#) by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as an unpaid family member or other person who regularly aids and supervises the daily care of an elderly or disabled person, but need not live in the same house. As **informal caregivers** are a broad category, the County

permits the following forms of documentation at County and County-partnered vaccination sites to allow for reasonable levels of proof by the simplest method and recommend other providers use the same criteria. This documentation includes:

- Letter from the [San Diego Regional Center](#) for caregivers of their clients.
 - If an individual presents to the provider with a letter from the California Department of Developmental Services (DDS), they should be **instructed to contact their “case worker” or “service coordinator” at the Regional Center.**
 - The Regional Center staff will provide them with a personalized version of the letter that identifies the family member as an informal caregiver.
 - They can present the *personalized* letter as evidence of their eligibility for Phase 1A Tier 2 at any vaccination location.
- Letter from the provider of the person receiving care stating that the caregiver is an informal caregiver.
 - If the patient is not associated with the Regional Center, the provider may use their clinical judgement to determine that a family member is an informal caregiver.
 - Providers may write a letter of support for those individuals, as they see fit, but are under no obligation to do so.
 - When a letter is provided, use the term “informal caregiver” for clarity in establishing eligibility for Phase 1A vaccination.
- Some individuals may still attempt to be recognized as informal caregivers without documentation and there may be some inconsistency at vaccination locations in whether they are offered a vaccine.

• **Updated CDC Guidance**

- The CDC [Clinical Considerations on COVID-19 Vaccination webpage](#) is frequently updated. On January 21, 2021, CDC [provided new guidance](#) including:
 - mRNA COVID-19 vaccines can safely be given to persons with evidence of a prior symptomatic or asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infection. Vaccination must be deferred until the criteria to discontinue isolation have been met and the person has recovered from acute symptoms (if present) and after 90 days, if antibody passive antibody treatment was administered. While there is no recommended minimum interval between infection and vaccination, **while vaccine supply remains limited**, persons with recent documented acute SARS-CoV-2 infection may choose to temporarily delay vaccination, if desired, recognizing that the risk of reinfection, and therefore the need for vaccination, may increase with time following initial infection.
 - If the second dose of a vaccine must be given after the recommended date (i.e., 21 days, Pfizer-BioNTech; 28 days, Moderna), it should be given as soon as possible; scheduling administration up to 6 weeks (42 days) after the first dose is acceptable. If the second dose is administered beyond 6 weeks, there is no need to restart the series.
 - mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are not interchangeable, and the safety and efficacy of a mixed product series has not been studied so providers should make every effort to determine which vaccine product was received at first dose. However, if the first-dose vaccine product cannot be determined or is no longer available, any available mRNA COVID-19 vaccine may be administered at a minimum interval of 28 days. When two doses of different mRNA COVID-19 vaccine products are administered, no additional doses of either product are recommended.
 - mRNA COVID-19 vaccines may be administered to persons who have received injectable dermal fillers who have no other contraindications to vaccination. No additional precautions are needed. However, these persons should be advised to contact their provider if they develop swelling at or near the site of dermal filler following vaccination which has been infrequently observed.

• **County Survey**

- The County recently commissioned a survey on perceptions of the COVID-19 vaccine. The survey found the following and highlights are also [here](#):
 - Over 95% of a representative sample of San Diego residents indicated awareness of the vaccine.
 - 72% of residents reported being likely to take the vaccine, while 25% of residents reported being unlikely to take it.
 - Higher percentages of those reporting being unlikely to take the vaccine were in certain groups: 36% of African Americans, 24% of those under age 50, 26% of those at low risk for a poor outcome from contracting COVID, and 26% of those with lower levels of formal education.
 - Providers are the most trusted messengers of information about the COVID-19 vaccine. Doctors, nurses, and medical researchers are by far the most trusted, indicating that these professionals should be at the forefront of communications about the vaccine.
 - Residents expressed preference in locations for getting the vaccine, most notably their own doctor's office (66%), a pharmacy (41%), or a local medical clinic (33%).
 - Messages that resonated well with respondents were about the vaccine getting us back to normal, emphasizing safety and no-cost availability.

- **Scheduling Resources**

- Information and tools for scheduling COVID vaccination in San Diego County are available on the County [COVID-19 Vaccination Sites & Appointments webpage](#).
 - The County has implemented the CDPH COVID-19 scheduling tool, [MyTurn](#) (Please note: it is recommended to use a browser other than Internet Explorer to complete your appointment registration.)
 - Persons who received their first dose prior to 1/23/2021 at **County managed locations**, will receive a [MyTurn](#) link within 7 days from their second dose date that will include available dates and locations for them to schedule their second dose.

- **Vaccine-Related Resources**

- The following vaccine-related County, federal, and national resources are available:
 - Patients aged 75 and older **who do not have internet access** can call 2-1-1 San Diego for direct appointment assistance. While 2-1-1 San Diego currently cannot make appointments for those under 75, they are be available for healthcare resource navigation and technological support.
 - Providers can now access the San Diego County [COVID-19 Community Conversations Toolbox](#). It provides information to engage with staffs, patients, or community groups. Here, providers can access a vaccine-specific slide set, which will be updated routinely; Frequently Asked Questions, or FAQs; and handouts to use with patients, such as [COVID-19 Vaccination for 65+ \(Spanish\)](#) and [COVID-19 Vaccination Phases \(Spanish\)](#). Additional handouts and materials will be added as they are finalized.
 - The [CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Communication and Recipient Education Toolkits](#) offers materials for provider use.
 - New England Journal of Medicine has a [Frequently Asked Questions page](#) for clinicians.

Actions Requested

1. Providers administering vaccines should:
 - Continue to vaccinate patients in Phase 1A and those [65 years and older](#) (Phase 1B Tier 1).
 - Be aware of Phase 1A [clarifications](#) and acceptable documentation noted for caregivers of elderly and/or individuals with disabilities.
2. All providers should stay up to date on CDC's [Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States](#) (last updated 01/21/2021).

3. All providers should use educational information and resources noted above to engage with their patients and community on vaccines, even if it is not yet their turn. Important San Diego County specific information on vaccination eligibility, documentation, vaccination sites and appointment scheduling ([My Turn](#)) is available on the [County webpage](#). As a trusted messenger, providers can educate and empower their patients to make informed choices and address vaccine hesitancy by countering fear with facts.

Thank you for your continued participation.

CAHAN San Diego

County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency
Epidemiology and Immunization Services Branch
Phone: (619) 692-8499; Fax: (858) 715-6458
Urgent Phone for pm/weekends/holidays: (858) 565-5255

E-mail: cahan@sdcountry.ca.gov
Secure Website: <https://member.everbridge.net/892807736722952/login>
Public Website: <http://www.cahansandiego.com>