



COVID-19 COMMUNICATION



Overview of COVID-19 Vaccine Process

A message to all CMH team members from John Alexander, MD, MHCM, FACEP,
Chief Medical Officer, CMH

Dear CMH Team,

I am excited to tell you that we received a shipment of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. Central Maine Medical Center is one of six sites in Maine selected to receive the initial doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. Across our system, team members have been hard at work in preparation for its arrival and its distribution.

To determine the order in which team members may be vaccinated, we followed the considerations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, part of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

We examined the different roles in CMH. We looked into which ones involved direct contact with patients, handling of infectious material, and whether they were in inpatient or outpatient settings.

As of today, the roll out will follow this sequence but is subject to change:

1. Team members who work in or support areas where there is a high likelihood of contact with patients who are COVID positive but whose status is unknown and may be mixed with patients who are COVID negative. Team members who come in contact with infectious materials from these areas
2. Team members who have an increased risk of exposure due to aerosolizing procedures, which pose a high risk
3. Team members who have repeated exposure to known COVID positive patients
4. Team members who have repeated exposure to known COVID positive patients based on our surge plan
5. Team members over the age of 65
6. All other team members who have direct patient contact

At this point, women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or post-partum are excluded from receiving the vaccine, but that recommendation may change. In addition, individuals who have a history of severe allergic reaction should not receive the vaccine.

In reviewing the clinical studies which supported the FDA decision to grant Emergency Use Authorization, the key findings for the Pfizer vaccine are:

- it was shown to be 95% effective in preventing COVID infection, with only 8 persons infected out of more than 18,000 receiving the vaccine, compared to 162 persons who received placebo;
- only 1 vaccine recipient developed severe COVID-19, compared to 3 placebo recipients; and,
- the most common side effects included:
 - pain, redness and/or swelling at the injection site in up to 80% of recipients;
 - fever and/or chills in up to 14% of recipients after the first dose and up to 35% after the second dose of the vaccine;
 - fatigue in up to 60%;
 - headache in up to 52%;
 - muscle aches in up to 37%; and
 - joint aches in up to 22%.

I share this information with you so that you can make the best choice for yourself.

We do not know the exact dates when we will launch our vaccination program as we continue to compile educational materials for you to review. Please keep an eye out for additional communications. They will include practical information about how you can sign up for vaccination.

If you have questions, we will do our very best to answer them. A link is on the team member portal at <https://www.cmhc.org/team-alert/ask-a-question/> allows you to submit questions. You may also find this [material from the CDC](#) useful.

Thank you for all your hard work during these long, difficult months of the pandemic. I am proud to work alongside you.

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