



Health Alert Network

Tri-County Health Department

Serving Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties

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The pages that follow contain information critical to protecting the health of your patients and the citizens of Colorado.

HAN UPDATE

Number of pages including cover: 7

Subject: **Update - COVID-19 Vaccine Plan for Long Term Care Facilities - 10.28.2020**

Message ID: 10/28/2020 2:30:00 PM

Recipients: HAN Community Members.

From: TRI-COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas County, Colorado

Recipient Instructions: Please review the attached Health Alert Network (HAN) Update regarding COVID-19 Vaccine Planning for Long Term Care Facilities (LTCF). This update is serving to provide additional communication to encourage LTCF enrollment in the CDC Pharmacy Partnership Program for COVID-19 vaccine distribution and administration. This update provides options for ensuring LTCF residents and staff are able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

For questions specific to the pharmacy partnership program for LTCFs, please contact eocevent494@cdc.gov

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Categories of Health Alert Network Messages:

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention. **Health Advisory:** Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

Info Service/Public Health Brief: Provides general information that is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.

You may download a copy of this HAN from the TCHD website at <http://www.tchd.org/259/Health-Alert-Network>



HAN Update

COVID-19 Vaccine Plan for Long Term Care Facilities 10/28/2020

*****Health care providers: Please distribute widely in your office*****

KEY POINTS:

All LTCF should have received an invitation to participate in the CDC Pharmacy Partnership Program through the Health Facilities Community Blog. This update acts as additional communication to encourage LTCF to enroll.

DEADLINE TO ENROLL IS NOVEMBER 6, 2020

BACKGROUND:

Residents and staff of Long Term Care Facilities (LTCF) are included in the first phase of persons recommended for COVID-19 vaccine once it becomes available. LTCF residents are at an increased risk for moderate to severe disease and death, and LTCF staff are part of the critical workforce to maintain essential societal functions.

LTCF have three options for ensuring that residents and staff are able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine:

1. Enroll in [CDC's Pharmacy Partnership for Long Term Care Program](#) to receive vaccine through either Walgreens or CVS. Pharmacy staff will administer the vaccine **FREE OF CHARGE**, and further details are below.
2. Enroll in [CDC's COVID-19 Vaccination Program](#) to receive COVID vaccine directly from the State. LTCF choosing this option will be responsible for vaccine cold chain management, vaccine administration, and required reporting.
3. Partner with another facility enrolled in CDC's COVID-19 Vaccination Program (e.g. other immunizing provider).

CDC Pharmacy Partnership for Long Term Care plan: Either Walgreens or CVS will offer onsite COVID-19 vaccination services to your residents and any staff member not previously vaccinated **FREE OF CHARGE**.

PHARMACY WILL:

- Schedule and coordinate onsite clinic date(s) - likely 3 visits over 2 months
- Order vaccines and associated supplies
- Ensure cold chain management for vaccine
- Provide onsite administration of the vaccine
- Report required data to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) within 72 hours of vaccine administration

- Adhere to all applicable Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) COVID-19 testing requirements for LTCF staff

RECOMMENDATIONS & GUIDANCE:

If you are interested in enrolling in CDC's Pharmacy Partnership for LTCFs Program, you must sign up by **November 6, 2020**. This program is offered **FREE OF CHARGE** to LTCFs.

- Skilled nursing facilities can sign up through the [National Healthcare Safety Network \(NHSN\)](#)
- Assisted living facilities can sign up through an online [REDcap form](#).
- LTCFs will indicate which pharmacy partner they prefer onsite (Walgreens, CVS, or other preferred pharmacy)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For questions specific to the pharmacy partnership program for LTCFs, please contact eocevent494@cdc.gov

General resources:

- Tri-County Health Department: <http://www.tchd.org/>
- For COVID-19 updates, go to <https://www.tchd.org/AlertCenter.aspx>

Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program for COVID-19 Vaccination

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Can our facility obtain COVID-19 vaccine through our usual pharmacy and administer it ourselves like we do for influenza vaccine?

Yes, however, most of the COVID-19 vaccines currently in late-stage testing have stricter cold chain requirements than seasonal influenza vaccine, including requirements for some vaccines to be frozen. Additionally, each vaccine has different mixing requirements for administration and minimal interval requirements for a second dose, if indicated. Reporting requirements for COVID-19 vaccines will also be stricter than those for seasonal influenza vaccine. Anyone who administers COVID-19 vaccine is required to enroll as a vaccination provider and report individual-level administration data to the appropriate state, territorial, local, or federal jurisdiction once the vaccine has been administered. For facilities opting into the pharmacy partnership program, the pharmacy partner would be responsible for procuring vaccine, cold chain management, administration to residents (and staff who have not yet been vaccinated), and fulfillment of all reporting requirements to public health authorities on behalf of the facility.

2. How do I sign up for the Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program for COVID-19 Vaccination?

Nursing homes can sign up via the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN; <https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/index.html>) and assisted living facilities can sign up via an online survey (<https://redcap.link/LTCF>) starting October 19 and remaining open for two weeks.

3. Why are facilities being asked to consider the LTC pharmacy partnership program for vaccination of LTCF residents?

CDC is partnering with pharmacies to offer on-site COVID-19 vaccination services for nursing homes and assisted living facilities. The Pharmacy Partnership for Long-term Care (LTC) Program provides end-to-end management of the COVID-19 vaccination process, including cold chain management, on-site vaccinations, and fulfillment of reporting requirements, to facilitate safe vaccination of this patient population, while reducing burden on facilities and jurisdictional health departments.

4. Can staff at my facility get vaccinated via this program?

It is possible that staff will be eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccine earlier than LTCF residents as part of a recommendation for vaccination for healthcare personnel, including those in LTCFs. Any staff member who was not already vaccinated could be vaccinated through these on-site clinics; however, we strongly encourage staff to be vaccinated as soon as they are eligible, which may occur through mobile clinics and clinics run by health departments for healthcare personnel.

5. Our facility has their own pharmacy, are we required to participate in the LTC pharmacy partnership program for vaccine distribution?

No, you are not required to participate in this program. A facility can opt to have vaccine supply and management services coordinated by a pharmacy provider of their choice or opt in at a later time by [emailing eocevent494@cdc.gov](mailto:eocevent494@cdc.gov) to sign up if after the online form has closed. If an LTCF opts out of the pharmacy partnership program, the LTCF and the pharmacy provider of their choice are responsible for coordination of and adherence to all vaccine supply chain, storage, handling, administration, and reporting requirements, including strict cold chain and public health reporting requirements.

Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program for COVID-19 Vaccination

6. Can a combination of options be selected? For example, can we have some vaccination services be provided by our own pharmacy provider and some by the pharmacy partnership program.

Initially, a combination of options will not be possible. We are asking facilities to select a single option to facilitate efficient distribution of vaccine. We expect the pharmacy partnership services to continue on-site at the facility for approximately 2 months.

7. How would new LTCF residents be vaccinated?

After the initial phase of vaccinations, the facility can choose to continue to work with the pharmacy that provided their initial on-site clinics for additional doses or can choose to work with a pharmacy provider of their choice. Depending on vaccine supply, facilities may want to work with local hospitals to ensure residents have received their first dose before being discharged. Similarly, facilities may ask new admissions from the community to get vaccinated before admission.

8. What costs are we responsible for if we choose to participate in the pharmacy partnership program?

There will be no costs to the LTCF for participation in the pharmacy partnership program. It is anticipated that participating pharmacies will bill public and private insurance for the vaccine administration fees.

9. If the facility chooses its own pharmacy provider, will that pharmacy provider receive a payment for administering the vaccine?

Yes, it is anticipated that pharmacy providers will bill public and private insurance for the vaccine administration fees.

10. If the facility chooses its own pharmacy provider, what data will the facility or pharmacy have to report?

To administer COVID-19 vaccine, providers will need to sign a provider agreement, which requires reporting of specific data elements once vaccine has been administered. Required elements are: Administered at location: facility name/ID; administered at location: type; administration address (including county); administration date; CVX (Product); dose number; recipient ID*; vaccination event ID; lot Number: Unit of Use and/or Unit of Sale; MVX (Manufacturer); recipient address*; recipient date of birth*; recipient name*; recipient sex; sending organization; vaccine administering provider suffix; vaccine administering site (on the body); vaccine expiration date; vaccine route of administration; vaccination series complete.

11. When is the deadline for choosing to participate in the LTC pharmacy partnership program?

It is anticipated that the survey will open on October 19, 2020 and remain open for two weeks. During that time, the facility can make a change to their choice of pharmacy provider (e.g., select to participate in the pharmacy partnership program, but later opt out). However, after the form closes, no changes can be made via the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) or the online form and the facility will have to coordinate directly with the pharmacy provider selected to make any changes regarding vaccination supply and services.

12. Our facility is not enrolled in NHSN. Do we have to enroll in NHSN to indicate our options for vaccine supply?

Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program for COVID-19 Vaccination

A nursing home or skilled nursing facility must be enrolled in the NHSN LTCF COVID-19 module to be able to make a selection of COVID-19 vaccine pharmacy providers. Please follow the enrollment steps here: <https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/enroll.html>. Assisted living facilities wishing to participate should visit <https://redcap.link/LTCF>.

13. Who do we contact if we have problems with our vaccine supply?

For facilities that opt to participate in the pharmacy partnership program, please contact CVS or Walgreens directly if you encounter any issues. For facilities that opt out of the pharmacy partnership program, please contact the pharmacy provider of your choice or your jurisdiction's health department.

14. Is Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) mandating residents to be vaccinated with COVID-19 vaccine?

Not at this time. Please refer to CMS directly for requirements around COVID-19 vaccine in LTCFs.

15. Who should I reach out to if I have additional questions?

For questions specific to the pharmacy partnership program for LTCFs, please contact eocevent494@cdc.gov.

Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program for COVID-19 Vaccination

CDC is partnering with CVS and Walgreens to offer on-site COVID-19 vaccination services for residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities once vaccination is recommended for them.

The **Pharmacy Partnership for Long-term Care (LTC) Program** provides end-to-end management of the COVID-19 vaccination process, including cold chain management, on-site vaccinations, and fulfillment of reporting requirements, to facilitate safe vaccination of this patient population, while reducing burden on LTC facilities and jurisdictional health departments. The services will be available in rural areas that may not have easily accessible pharmacies. LTCF staff who have not received COVID-19 vaccine can also be vaccinated as part of the program.

As part of this program, which is free of charge to facilities, the pharmacy will:

- Schedule and coordinate on-site clinic date(s) directly with each facility. Three visits over approximately two months will likely be needed to administer both doses of vaccine and vaccinate any new residents and staff.
- Order vaccines and associated supplies (e.g., syringes, needles, personal protective equipment).
- Ensure cold chain management for vaccine.
- Provide on-site administration of vaccine.
- Report required vaccination data (approximately 20 data fields) to the local, state/territorial, and federal jurisdictions within 72 hours of administering each dose.
- Adhere to all applicable Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) COVID-19 testing requirements for LTCF staff.

If interested in participating, LTCFs should sign up (or opt out) starting October 19. Sign up will remain open for two weeks.

- Skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) will make their selection through the [National Healthcare Safety Network](#) (NHSN). An “alert” will be incorporated into the NHSN LTCF COVID-19 module to guide users to the form.
- Assisted living facilities (ALFs) will make their selection via an online [REDcap](https://redcap.link/lpcf) (<https://redcap.link/lpcf>) sign-up form.
- Facilities will indicate which pharmacy partner (one of two large retail pharmacies or existing LTC pharmacy) they prefer to have on site.
- Online sign-up information will be distributed through ALF and SNF partner communication channels (email, social media, web).
- Indicating interest in participating is non-binding and facilities may change their selection or opt in or out via email after the online survey closes.

Once the sign-up period has closed, no changes can be made via the online form, and the facility must coordinate directly with the selected pharmacy provider to change any requested vaccination supplies and services.

CDC will communicate preferences to CVS and Walgreens and will try to honor facility preferences but may reassign facilities depending on vaccine availability and distribution considerations and to minimize vaccine wastage.

CDC expects the program services to continue on site at participating facilities for approximately two months. After the initial phase of vaccinations, each facility can choose to continue working with CVS or Walgreens or can work with a pharmacy provider of its choice.

For questions about the Pharmacy Partnership for Long-term Care Program, please contact eocevent494@cdc.gov.