

## The Federal Retail Pharmacy Program for COVID-19 Vaccination

### Key Communication Messages for Jurisdictions and Partners

#### Program Overview

- The federal government has partnered with 21 national pharmacy chains and independent pharmacy networks to help administer COVID-19 vaccine in communities across the United States as part of the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program for COVID-19 Vaccination.
- The program will be implemented incrementally, based on the available supply of COVID-19 vaccines. As part of this initial phase, select retail pharmacies in each state and U.S. territory will receive a limited supply of COVID-19 vaccine directly from the federal government to vaccinate eligible individuals in their communities.
- This program represents one component of the Administration's strategy to expand access to vaccines for the American public.
- This phase of the program is designed to engage the system in a limited way to ensure the infrastructure is ready for large scale implementation when vaccine supply increases. Eventually, as vaccine supply increases, more than 40,000 pharmacy locations nationwide will be providing COVID-19 vaccine through the program.
- When fully implemented, the program will help increase access to COVID-19 vaccination across the country while decreasing the burden on state, local, and territorial health departments.
- CDC worked with states and territories to select initial pharmacy partners to start the program in their communities. Jurisdictions made selections based on a number of factors including the number of stores, the ability to reach some of the populations most at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 (those over 65 years of age, socially vulnerable communities), and alignment with their existing vaccination plan. The initial selections are just a starting point, and eventually, pharmacy partners will provide COVID-19 vaccine in every state or territory where they have retail or long-term care pharmacy locations.
- Some states have already engaged pharmacies as trusted partners to help with COVID-19 vaccine administration through their state planning efforts.
- Individuals who are eligible for vaccination in their state and are interested in getting vaccinated at their local pharmacy should check the pharmacy's website to find out if vaccine is available.
- CDC has developed a [webpage](#) that provides the name of pharmacy partners currently participating in the program by state.

#### Eligibility for Vaccination through the Program

- Pharmacy partners will vaccinate individuals who are currently eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccine in their state or territory.
- Pharmacy partners will employ eligibility screeners to determine if someone is eligible for COVID-19 vaccination according to their state or territory's eligibility criteria.
- Screeners may ask individuals about their age, occupation, or underlying medical conditions. Screeners may also check for contraindications and precautions to COVID-19 vaccines.
  - Pharmacies will not require proof of age, occupation, or any other type of credentials; this assures that no one will be turned away for lack of specific identification documents (e.g. driver's licenses) and eases the burden on participating pharmacies and individuals.

#### Vaccine Allocation for the Program

- The federal government provided 1 million doses of Moderna vaccine for the first week of the program. These doses are being divided among participating pharmacy partners.
- Additional doses will be allocated to the program weekly thereafter, based on the available supply of COVID-19 vaccines.

- The vaccine allocation provided for the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program is separate from the vaccine allocation being provided weekly to states and territories.
- The program will begin with per capita allocations by each jurisdiction that will be divided among the selected pharmacy partners based on number of stores and reach. As the program expands, and supply becomes more readily available, the allocation may be adjusted to reflect partner size (number of store locations nationwide), reach (percent of the total U.S. population living within 5 miles of a store location), and ability to vaccinate (throughput).
- The CDC worked with federal pharmacy partners to determine which retail locations in their assigned states and territories will receive COVID-19 vaccine as the program launches. Partners will continue to expand stores included in the program as additional supply increases. CDC will share the list of retail locations with states and territories.
- The pharmacy partners will decide, in close coordination with CDC, exactly how many doses will be shipped to each store based on how many people they expect to vaccinate daily.
- CDC will continuously monitor pharmacy partners' inventory in each state and territory to help ensure equitable access across the country and will collaborate with pharmacy partners to shift inventory to best meet public health needs.

#### **Collaboration between Pharmacy Partners, CDC, and State, Local, and Territorial Public Health**

- The Federal Retail Pharmacy Program relies on a close collaboration between pharmacy partners, CDC, and state, local, and territorial public health departments.
- As the program rolls out, CDC and state, local, and territorial health departments will continue to lead community outreach and education by encouraging eligible individuals to get vaccinated.
- States and territories will have access to the program data, including ordering data and inventory levels for retail pharmacies in their communities, and will be engaged in ensuring the program helps meet their public health needs.