

The hospital surge plans that were called for by the Governor in recent weeks are being utilized and the State continues to closely monitor hospital capacity.

Much of the press conference was used to explain the State's COVID vaccine distribution plan.

- **Who Can Administer the Vaccine?**

- The Department of Health today issued an order allowing any individual to administer the COVID vaccination, subject to the following:
  - The individual has successfully completed training on the administration of COVID-19 vaccines;
  - Qualified supervisory personnel at the vaccination site reasonably determine that the individual is able to administer COVID-19 vaccines under appropriate supervision; and
  - The individual administers the COVID-19 vaccine at the vaccination site under the reasonable supervision of qualified supervisory personnel.

- **Vaccination Distribution Plan**

- Dr. Jinlene Chan, Deputy Secretary of Public Health and Bryan Mroz, Assistant Secretary of DOH spoke on the plan.
- Allocation
  - The State will follow the CDC's prioritization plan, which calls for vaccinating health care workers, nursing home and assisted living residents first. This is Group 1A, which is believed to include about 800,00 people in Maryland.
  - Group 1B will include other "higher risk" individuals and first responders.
  - Group 2 will include people in "critical roles" including "essential infrastructure workers" and individuals who are moderately high risk.
  - Group 3 will include the general population.
- Vaccine Count
  - Maryland will be initially be allotted 155,300 initial doses with the second dose to follow at the proper interval.
    - 50,000 of the doses will be the Pfizer vaccine
      - The potential distribution date is 12/14
      - The 2<sup>nd</sup> dose comes at 21 days after initial dose
    - 104,300 of the doses will be the Moderna vaccine
      - The potential distribution date is 12/22
      - The 2<sup>nd</sup> dose comes at 28 days after initial dose
- Vaccine Ordering, Distribution, Monitoring, and Record Keeping
  - The State's existing immunization information system, Immunet, will be used for these purposes and has been enhanced to meet the demands of these added requirements.
  - Providers will order vaccines through Immunet and the Federal Government will deliver directly to providers.
  - Immunet is being enhanced to include a Consumer Access Portal so that a person may check their own immunization record. ([www.maryland.MyIR.net](http://www.maryland.MyIR.net)).
- Vaccine Storage
  - The vaccine requires storage at ultra-low temperatures:
    - Pfizer -80 degrees Celsius
    - Moderna -20 degrees Celsius
  - Pfizer has created storage containers which will hold the required temperature with dry ice, and which are remotely monitored so that additional dry ice can be added to maintain the temperature.

- The Moderna vaccine at the “warmer” temperature is more compatible with the existing infrastructure in medical facilities.

- **Vaccine Public Relations/Vaccine Confidence Campaign**

- The State will use local voices to encourage people to take the vaccine and emphasize its safety.
- The Governor and Lt. Gov will publicly get vaccinated as part of this effort.
- The State will use social, print, and other forms of media to immediately respond to misinformation on the vaccine.

- **Common Questions from the Public**

- Dr. Chan answered several questions that MDH has routinely heard about the vaccine.
- *Is the vaccine safe?* Yes. Based on the clinical trial data it is very safe.
- *Are there side effects?* Yes. Mild side effects like pain at the administration site; mild fever or aches, for a period within 1-2 days after vaccination.
- *Can children take the vaccine?* Clinical trials for children have not been completed and therefore there is currently no data as to children, although that will be coming soon as trials are expected to be completed soon.
- *Do I need to get vaccinated every year?* It is as of now unknown how long the immunity lasts.
- *Do I need to wear a mask after being vaccinated?* Yes, mainly for the protection of those who have NOT yet been vaccinated.
- *Can I pre-register to get vaccinated?* The State is working on a system to allow this.
- *Will the vaccine be mandatory for children or State employees?* See above as to children (No) and the State is encouraging vaccination, not mandating.

- **Useful Links**

<https://governor.maryland.gov/category/press-releases/>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFTeZxEF2po>