

NMDOH News Brief

IMMUNIZATION



NM Department of Health Immunization Program

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COVID-19 vaccine rollout: Support for providers

Edward Wake
CDC Public Health Advisor to New Mexico

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) is leading the State of New Mexico's COVID-19 Vaccination Preparedness Planning in close collaboration with other state agencies, public, private and tribal partners throughout the state. The New Mexico Immunization Program (NMIP) has been ensuring that all providers who plan to provide COVID-19 vaccine to patients have registered to access vaccine doses for their

patients. Recruitment to register providers started in late fall of 2020 and is ongoing. NMIP has also instituted weekly Immunization Program Operational Office Hours (Office Hours) as a companion to provider recruitment and vaccination efforts.

The focus of the Office Hours meeting is to ensure providers remain aware of the

policies, procedures and intricacies involved in providing COVID-19 vaccine, which has unique

NMDOH welcomes all health care providers who are interested in contributing to COVID-19 vaccination efforts

COVID Vaccine Provider Support
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Getting 'Back to Normal' Is Going to Take **All of Our Tools**

If we use all the tools we have, we stand the best chance of getting our families, communities, schools, and workplaces "back to normal" sooner:

- Get vaccinated.
- Wear a mask.
- Stay 6 feet from others, and avoid crowds.
- Wash hands often.

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines

CDC provides vaccine information materials like this sheet; more on page 5

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NMIC Annual Meeting and Celebration

Anna Pentler
New Mexico Immunization Coalition

In keeping with the unusualness of 2020, NMIC held its annual meeting as a remote zoom meeting over three days, with each section of the meeting as a discreet 1.5 hour session. On December 1, 2 and 3, NMIC members participated in several different informative sessions.

On day 1, NMIC was fortunate to have as keynote speaker, Dr. Andrew Kroger, CDC Medical Educator, who gave a general vaccine update and outlined strategies to catch children up on missed vaccines during the pandemic. Then the group listened to presentations from Dan Burke, Infectious Disease Bureau Chief, and Joelle Jacobs, Vaccine Outreach Manager. They presented on NM's local efforts for COVID-19 and Flu vaccines. On the second day, Katie Cruz, NMSIIS Program Manager, presented on IIS as a tool in pandemic management. Later on, the group was separated into breakout rooms to brainstorm ideas for NMIC activities for the upcoming year.



On day 3, David Forman, PhD candidate with UNM CASAA, presented on Motivational Interviewing as a tool for influencing vaccine seeking behavior and acceptance, especially now during the time of COVID.

NMIC coordinated this large zoom meeting through the excellent partnership with Comagine Health who provided the technical side of the meeting and ran the zoom. Through Comagine Health we offered CMEs to participants. We certainly missed seeing NMIC members in person, but the remote meeting was a success with about 95 people attending each of the three days. In case you missed it, the recording of the meeting is available for on the Comagine youtube channel.

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRNf0WN880iuHJZCgFaeIJTKmrMKnBsE6>

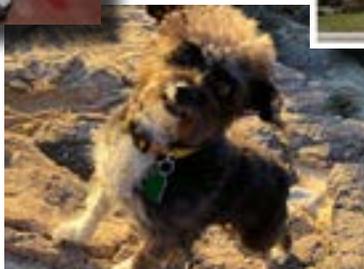


Photo submissions for the NMIC Annual Meeting photo segment.

V-safe—The new CDC vaccine safety tool for COVID vaccine

Edward Wake
CDC Public Health Advisor to New Mexico

The U.S. vaccine safety system works to ensure that all vaccines are as safe as possible. Safety is considered a top priority while federal partners work to make several COVID-19 vaccines available.

With two new COVID-19 vaccines now in use, the Centers for Disease and Prevention (CDC) has implemented a new tool, v-safe, as an additional layer of safety monitoring to increase the ability to rapidly detect any safety issues with COVID-19 vaccines. V-safe is a new smartphone-based, after-vaccination health checker for people who receive COVID-19 vaccines.

Through v-safe, you can quickly tell CDC if you have any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Depending on your answers, someone from CDC may call to check on you and get more information. Through the v-safe system you will get a reminder for your second COVID-19 vaccine dose if one is required to complete the series.

Get vaccinated. Get your smartphone. Get started with v-safe.

What is v-safe?
v-safe is a smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Through v-safe, you can quickly tell CDC if you have any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Depending on your answers, someone from CDC may call to check on you. And v-safe will remind you to get your second COVID-19 vaccine dose if you need one.
Your participation in CDC's v-safe makes a difference—it helps keep COVID-19 vaccines safe.

How can I participate?
Once you get a COVID-19 vaccine, you can enroll in v-safe using your smartphone. Participation is voluntary and you can opt out at any time. You will receive text messages from v-safe around 2 p.m. local time. To opt out, simply text "STOP" when v-safe sends you a text message. You can also start v-safe again by texting "START."

How long do v-safe check-ins last?
During the first week after you get your vaccine, v-safe will send you a text message each day to ask how you are doing. Then you will get check-in messages once a week for up to 5 weeks. The questions v-safe asks should take less than 5 minutes to answer. If you need a second dose of vaccine, v-safe will provide a new 6-week check-in process so you can share your second-dose vaccine experience as well. You'll also receive check-ins 3, 6, and 12 months after your final dose of vaccine.

Is my health information safe?
Yes. Your personal information in v-safe is protected so that it stays confidential and private.*

*To the extent v-safe uses existing information systems managed by CDC, FDA, and other federal agencies, the systems already have security measures appropriate for the data level of sensitivity.

v-safe
after vaccination health checker

Use your smartphone to tell CDC about any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. You'll also get reminders if you need a second vaccine dose.

Sign up with your smartphone's browser at vsafe.cdc.gov
OR
Aim your smartphone's camera at this code

Your COVID-19 vaccine immunizer can provide information on how to enroll in v-safe. More information on the program can also be found here. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html>

The CDC will continue to use other existing systems to monitor the safety of COVID-19 and other vaccines administered to US residents. These include:

- National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) — An acute and long-term care facility monitoring system with

reporting to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System or VAERS that will allow for determination of COVID-19 vaccine adverse event reporting rates.

- Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) — The national system that collects reports from healthcare professionals, vaccine manufacturers, and the public of adverse events that happen after vaccination; reports of adverse events that are unexpected, appear to happen more often than expected, or have unusual patterns are followed up with specific studies
- Vaccine Safety Datalink (VSD) — A network of nine integrated healthcare organizations across the United States that conducts active surveillance and research; the system is also used to help determine whether possible side effects identified using VAERS are actually related to vaccination
- CDC: Clinical Immunization Safety Assessment (CISA) Project — A collaboration between CDC and 7 medical research centers to provide expert consultation on individual cases and conduct clinical research studies about vaccine safety

COVID Vaccine Provider Support
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documentation requirements compared to other routinely administered vaccines.

Office Hours meetings consist of updates, information sharing and presentations given by NMIP management and other subject matter experts. Following presentations, a question-and-answer session takes place to give attendees the opportunity to discuss challenges and successes in conducting vaccination efforts with NMIP staff and their counterparts.

NMIP hopes the Office Hours meetings will reduce the concerns of providers in implementing COVID-19 vaccine protocols, ease provider workload and establish positive relationships with the facilities and providers who are on the frontline of New Mexico’s vaccination efforts.

The Office Hours meeting takes place on Thursdays from 4-5 pm. Contact NMIP for the meeting information.

Providers who are registered to receive

COVID-19 vaccines will be invited to the weekly meeting. Those who are interested but have not yet registered can do so at the COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Portal webpage, located [here](https://cv.nmhealth.org/providers/vaccines/vaccine-provider-portal/). <https://cv.nmhealth.org/providers/vaccines/vaccine-provider-portal/>

NMDOH welcomes all health care providers who are interested

in contributing to COVID-19 vaccination efforts in the state. New Mexico began vaccinating health care personnel and long-term care facility staff and residents, or Phase 1a recipients, with COVID-19 vaccines in late December. As those in the first phase have gotten vaccinated

and more doses arrive in the state, New Mexico is moving on to provide vaccine to the next phases of individuals. Phase 1b will include people 75 years of age and older, individuals 16 or older with underlying medical conditions that place them at greater risk from COVID-19, frontline essential workers (such as police and firefighters) who cannot work remotely, and vulnerable populations. Phase 1c will include people 60 and older and other essential workers who cannot work from home. Finally, in Phase 2, the general public can receive vaccine.

Questions about COVID-19 related issues can be addressed at 1-855-600-3453. You may also email inquiries to COVID.Vaccines@state.nm.us.

PHASE 1A
In order of priority

- Hospital personnel
- Residents and staff of long-term care facilities
- Medical first responders
- Congregate setting workers (homeless shelters, correctional facilities, residential treatment centers, and community homes)
- Persons providing direct medical care and other in-person services
- Home-based healthcare and hospice workers

***Winter - Spring**
*Estimated time frames, dependent on COV receiving vaccine

PHASE 1B
In order of priority

- Persons 75+
- Persons 16+ at risk of COVID complications
- Frontline essential workers unable to work remotely: Early education and K-12 educators/staff, caregivers, grocery stores, food and agriculture, public transit, critical manufacturing, public health, public safety, mortuaries, indigent care, non-hospital laboratories
- Vulnerable populations: Residents of congregate settings¹

***Winter - Spring**
¹Estimated time frames, dependent on COV receiving vaccine. Vulnerable populations at risk of COVID complications can be vaccinated sooner.

Three Reasons Why You Were Given Top Priority to Be Vaccinated Against COVID-19



- 1** You are on the front lines and risk being exposed to people with COVID-19 each day on the job.
- 2** Protecting you also helps protect your patients and your family, especially those who may be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- 3** You matter. And you play an essential role in keeping your community healthy.

Lead the way!
Encourage your coworkers, patients, family and friends to get vaccinated.



www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines

LONG-TERM CARE RESIDENTS AND LOVED ONES: Answering Common Questions About COVID-19 Vaccines

Based on [recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\)](#), an independent panel of medical and public health experts, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends residents of long-term care facilities (LTCFs) be included among those offered the first supply of COVID-19 vaccines. Making sure LTCF residents can receive COVID-19 vaccination as soon as vaccine is available will help save the lives of those who are at the highest risk for infection and severe illness from COVID-19.

CDC has provided frequently asked questions and answers especially for LTCF residents and their families to help everyone understand the importance of COVID-19 vaccination. The information below is especially tailored to help answer questions before vaccination. [The CDC website](#) offers many other free tools in multiple languages to help answer common questions that are not specific to LTCF residents.

Q Can residents and loved ones feel confident that COVID-19 vaccines are safe?
Yes. The safety of COVID-19 vaccines is a top priority. All of the vaccines that will be used have gone through the same safety tests and meet the same safety standards as other vaccines. To help make important medical products, including vaccines, available quickly during the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) can use what is known as an [Emergency Use Authorization \(EUA\)](#). For an EUA to be issued for a vaccine, for which there is adequate manufacturing information to ensure quality and consistency, FDA must determine that the known and potential benefits outweigh the known and potential risks of the vaccine. The U.S. vaccine safety system monitors the safety of all vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, to ensure they are as safe as possible. As people begin receiving COVID-19 vaccinations, CDC and FDA will continue to

Q Do the benefits of vaccination outweigh the possible risks?
After a review of all the available information, ACIP and CDC agreed that the lifesaving benefits of vaccinating LTCF residents against COVID-19 outweigh the possible risks. COVID-19 vaccines that are being delivered to LTCFs were tested in large studies that included adults age 65 and older. The study results showed that the vaccines were safe and provided protection from COVID-19 in these older adults.

Q What are the possible side effects?
The most common side effect is pain at the injection site, and some individuals experience symptoms like fever and chills. These side effects tend to be mild to moderate and go away quickly. These side effects are signs that the immune system is doing exactly what it is supposed to do. It is working and building up protection against the disease. Serious side effects after vaccination were very rare.

Q Why is it important that LTCF staff receives COVID-19 vaccine, even if LTCF residents are vaccinated?
Receiving a COVID-19 vaccine is an important step to prevent getting sick with COVID-19 disease. HCP, including LTCF staff, were placed first in line to receive COVID-19 vaccine because of their essential role in fighting this deadly pandemic, and their increased risk of getting COVID-19 and spreading it to their patients. The decision to get vaccinated protects more than just your health. It can also help protect your colleagues, facility residents, families, and communities.

Q Will I still need to wear masks, gloves, or personal protective equipment in the facility after receiving COVID-19 vaccination?
Yes. COVID-19 vaccines will be an important tool to help stop the pandemic. However, staff members who have been vaccinated should continue to follow all [current guidance](#) to protect themselves and others, including proper use of [personal protective equipment](#). Because we need to use all the prevention tools available, you should continue to cover your nose and mouth with a [mask](#), when around others, avoid [close contact](#) with people who are sick, [stop, skip, splash, and stop](#), avoid crowds, and [clean your hands often](#).

Q Can I feel confident that COVID-19 vaccines are safe?
Yes. The safety of COVID-19 vaccines is a top priority. COVID-19 vaccines are being held to the same safety standards as all other vaccines. All COVID-19 vaccines being administered to LTCF staff and residents were tested in clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people to make sure they meet safety standards and protect adults of different ages, races, and ethnicities. There were no serious safety concerns. CDC and the FDA will keep monitoring the vaccines to look for safety issues after they are authorized and in use.



www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19

LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY STAFF: Answering Common Questions About COVID-19 Vaccines

Based on [recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\)](#), an independent panel of medical and public health experts, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that both healthcare personnel (HCP) and residents of long-term care facilities (LTCFs) be included among those offered the first supply of COVID-19 vaccines.

You are on the front lines and risk being exposed to COVID-19 each day on the job. Early vaccination can protect not only you from getting sick, but also help protect residents and your family members who may have underlying health conditions that put them at risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Q Why is it important that LTCF staff receives COVID-19 vaccine, even if LTCF residents are vaccinated?
Receiving a COVID-19 vaccine is an important step to prevent getting sick with COVID-19 disease. HCP, including LTCF staff, were placed first in line to receive COVID-19 vaccine because of their essential role in fighting this deadly pandemic, and their increased risk of getting COVID-19 and spreading it to their patients. The decision to get vaccinated protects more than just your health. It can also help protect your colleagues, facility residents, families, and communities.

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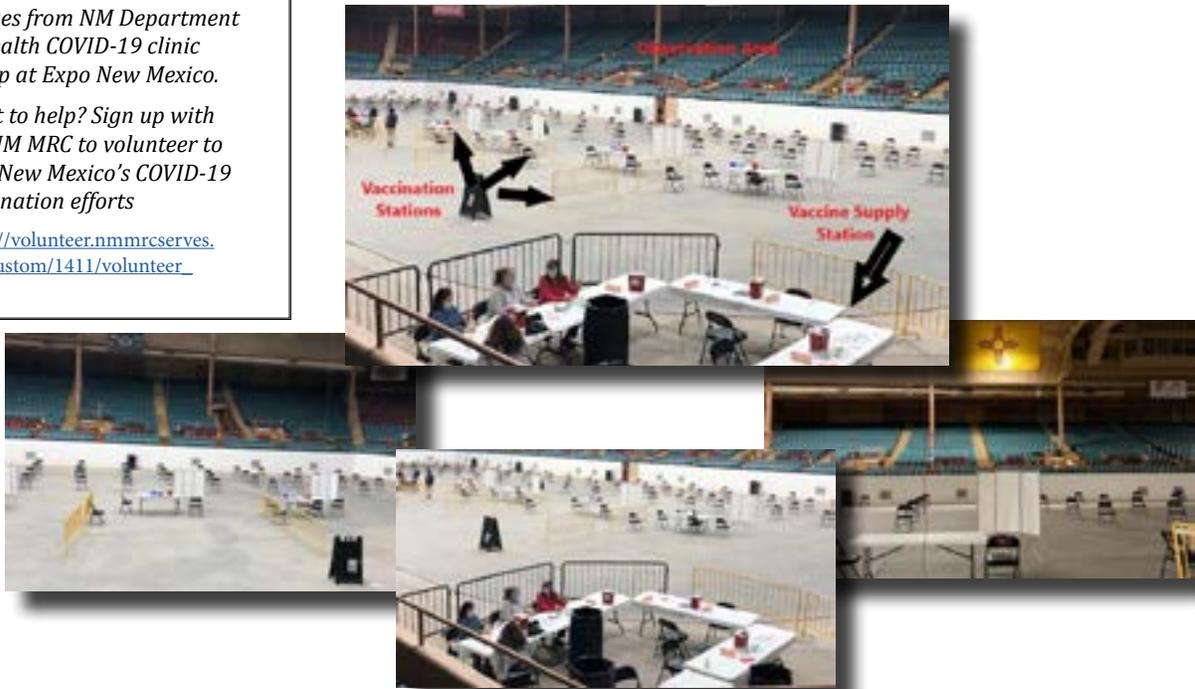


These CDC resources, and many more, are available online for you to print

Images from NM Department of Health COVID-19 clinic set-up at Expo New Mexico.

Want to help? Sign up with the NM MRC to volunteer to help New Mexico's COVID-19 vaccination efforts

https://volunteer.nmmrcservices.org/custom/1411/volunteer_home



Contact us

NM Department of Health
Andrea Romero, Acting Immunization Program Manager
Phone: (505)476-1451
andrea.romero@state.nm.us

www.immunizenm.org
Call or email us for more information about our newsletter or if you have an item to submit for publication.

