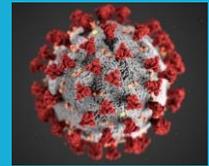


MAINE INTERIM COVID-19 VACCINATION PLAN



Executive Summary

October 26, 2020

Introduction

The emergence of COVID-19 has presented significant challenges for the State of Maine. After detecting its first case of COVID-19 in March 2020, Maine activated its entire public health infrastructure to quickly identify, investigate, and isolate COVID-19 cases. While responding to the emerging virus through testing, personal protective equipment (PPE) distribution, and contact tracing, Maine also began its planning for the eventual approval of a vaccine (or vaccines) for the prevention of COVID-19. Maine is committed to a COVID-19 vaccine planning and implementation process that furnishes the vaccine to Maine people in a timely, equitable fashion. In general, Maine will use three principles to guide its approach to COVID-19 vaccination: Equity, Accessibility, and Flexibility.

COVID-19 Vaccination Planning Sections:

Section 3: Phased Approach to COVID-19 Vaccination

Maine intends to largely follow the priority group detailed by the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Phase 1 will be divided into two sub-phases: 1(a) and 1(b). Phase 1(a) will likely include healthcare workers providing direct patient care in high risk settings and others who work in critical infrastructure, as well as those working and living in long-term care facilities. Phase 1(b) will likely focus on vaccinating individuals working in critical infrastructure outside of the healthcare setting once enough vaccine is available. Phase 2 will begin when vaccine supply is sufficient to vaccinate more broadly with the expectation to reach surge capacity efforts. Maine CDC will continue to vaccinate by priority group and begin using mass vaccination strategies such as open point of dispensing (POD) clinics. Phase 3 COVID-19 vaccination efforts will transition to routine vaccination. By this time, pharmacies will likely be able to vaccinate against COVID-19.

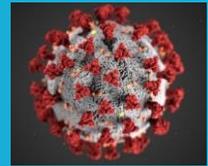
Section 4: Critical Populations

Maine reviewed multiple data sets to identify and determine approximate numbers of critical populations. Data collected and evaluated originated from the following resources: Data and Dashboards Team, Vaccine Planning Unit, U.S. CDC., Priority 1 Assessment Hospital Survey and Annual Surveys facilitated by the Maine Immunization Program (MIP), nursing home and long-term care facilities information from the Maine Division of Licensing and Regulatory Services, and Census data. Maine also considered health conditions of individuals. Based on what we know at this time, people with certain conditions such as serious heart conditions and diabetes, might be at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Because COVID-19 disproportionately struck Mainers of color in the beginning of the pandemic, Maine included a separate annex for Racial/Ethnic Minority COVID-19 Vaccination Planning. Maine worked with the Department of Transportation to map pharmacy locations throughout the state. Through this process, Maine was able to determine that pharmacies can greatly increase reach to critical populations as 99% percent of the people in Maine live within a 30-minute drive to a pharmacy.

Section 5: COVID-19 Vaccination Provider Recruitment and Enrollment

The Maine Immunization Program will prioritize enrollment of hospitals, long-term care facilities, and pharmacies throughout the state to ensure vaccination of Maine healthcare personnel and long-term care residents occurs in Phase 1. Indian Health Service sites that opt to get vaccine through the State will also be prioritized in Phase 1. Mobile vaccination providers, federally qualified health care facilities, and urgent care clinics will be prioritized for enrollment for Phase 2, and other locations not already addressed will be targeted later in the response.

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Section 8: COVID-19 Vaccine Storage and Handling

To ensure vaccine safety, all COVID-19 vaccination provider sites complete a Vaccine Storage and Handling and COVID-19 Vaccine Educational Training. Provider sites will also be required to utilize the Maine Immunization Information System (IIS) to record vaccine cold chain, track inventory, and document immunizations. Maine Immunization Program will ensure adherence to cold chain and inventory requirements by monitoring data in the IIS. Any site out of compliance will be contacted immediately. Providers must also adhere to the Maine Immunization Programs policies and procedures to safeguard vaccine.

Section 10: COVID-19 Vaccination Second-Dose Reminders

Vaccine providers will have the option to utilize the IIS's immunization forecaster for second dose reminders via the reminder recall functionality. We will also encourage organizations to utilize their electronic health records for reminder recall and their scheduling capabilities with the individual patients for a follow up appointment 21 or 28 days after the date of the first administration of vaccine.

Section 12: COVID-19 Vaccination Program Communication

Maine CDC is planning to engage an individual to lead proactive communication efforts for the public. This individual will build upon current communications to promote vaccine safety and dispel vaccine misinformation. Messages will focus on transparently communicating to the public about COVID-19 vaccine efficacy, potential risks, immunization recommendations, public health recommendations, and prevention measures. Maine CDC will use the Vaccinate with Confidence platform to tailor messages and reach key audiences including healthcare personnel, health insurance issuers, employers, government and community partners and stakeholders, and public consumer and essential workers.

Section 14: COVID-19 Vaccine Safety Monitoring

Prior to any sites receiving COVID-19 vaccine, the Maine Immunization Program will require COVID-19 vaccine providers to complete a COVID-19 Vaccine Training which will include an overview of vaccine safety and the importance and requirements of reporting adverse events following COVID-19 vaccine administration to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). This training will also discuss the requirements for providing patients with EUA fact sheets or Vaccine Information Statement and inform providers about the Clinical Immunization Safety Assessment Project which conducts clinical research and assesses complex adverse events following vaccination. MIP continues to update the Vaccine Safety Page on its website to include links to the required healthcare worker vaccine adverse reporting events, with the explanation that anyone can submit a report, and the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program. In addition, the Maine Immunization Program will continue its monitoring of VAERS reporting to identify potential adverse events relating to COVID-19 vaccination in the State of Maine.

Section 15: COVID-19 Vaccination Program Monitoring

Maine CDC is taking steps to ensure that vaccines are properly and equitably administered. Maine CDC will use tool such as the IIS and Tiberius to monitor vaccine inventory, distribution, and administration. To increase public awareness, ME CDC will disseminate health promotional information to the public to effectively communicate COVID-19 related messages. Communication efforts will be tracked by reviewing metrics such as number of downloads, clicks, and viewers for messages placed in mass media. Maine CDC also has measures in place to monitor COVID-19 funding to ensure that the intentions of the awarded funding meet the criteria for the expenditure. Resources such as staffing and supplies will also be closely monitored to prevent, as much as possible, staff burnout and supply shortages.