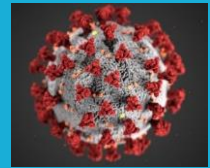


U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS INTERIM COVID-19 VACCINATION PLAN



Executive Summary - DRAFT

October 26, 2020

Introduction

Since March 2020, the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) Department of Health (VIDOH) has led a multisector response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the territory. Given the unknowns with vaccine planning, VIDOH's COVID-19 vaccination plan is being designed to be flexible and accommodating to multiple scenarios - ranging from an early vaccine campaign start as well as delays in production and distribution. The plan is also designed to align with the Vaccinate with Confidence Framework and build on existing commitments to community stakeholder engagement. While some challenges have been identified, VIDOH is confident of overcoming these issues through well-established relationships with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Department of Health and Human Services, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and abundance of local champions in the USVI. This approach will ensure VIDOH is able to administer vaccines across the major islands of St. Thomas, Water Island, St. John, and St. Croix and achieve the highest vaccine coverage possible.

COVID-19 Vaccination Planning Sections:

Section 3: Phased Approach to COVID-19 Vaccination

In Phase 1, healthcare workers and other priority groups will be vaccinated based on the quantity of vaccine available. If other target groups are identified based on surveillance, then VIDOH will utilize mobile vaccination units. In Phase 2, vaccinations will be administered through all available providers and mass vaccination outreach clinics. In Phase 3, a similar approach to phase 2 will be used but at a larger scale.

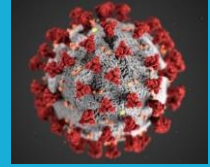
Section 4: Critical Populations

Identifying critical populations for COVID-19 vaccination is an essential first step to ensure prioritization of limited COVID-19 vaccines. As early estimates indicate, a high percent of USVI residents will qualify under CDC critical populations categories. VIDOH will use a two-prong strategy for identifying, estimating, and locating critical populations of the 106,405 people living in USVI. This will involve reviewing existing data sources for identifying and estimating critical populations, then validating data of critical populations with stakeholder engagement. This process will also ensure effective communication and outreach over the entire course of the vaccine operation.

Section 5: COVID-19 Vaccination Provider Recruitment and Enrollment

Recruitment for COVID-19 vaccination will begin with the current vaccinators within the territory that are licensed to provide vaccinations. Current vaccinators within the territory from the public and private sector will be contacted and asked to provide COVID-19 vaccinations. Additional recruitment of new providers will be generated via a notification/invitation to all healthcare providers in the territory. Providers interested in participating will apply for a permit according to the process identified by the Immunization Program at VIDOH. Providers who agree to participate in administering COVID-19 vaccine are required to complete a provider profile and agreement which require proof of licensure to vaccinate. Prioritization will include providers who serve critical populations. Virgin Islands Immunization Registry System (VIIRS) will be used to collect provider

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enrollment information. Transference of the data to the CDC is under consideration of using either Vaccine Administration Management System. Virtual training will be provided.

Section 8: COVID-19 Vaccine Storage and Handling

VIDOH will ensure adherence to COVID-19 vaccine storage and handling requirements, including cold chain requirements at all levels as well as universal precautions for preventing blood exposures and blood borne pathogen transmission. As part of the provider enrollment process, after licensure is confirmed, a site-visit will be conducted by VIDOH to determine if proper refrigeration, and temperature monitoring capabilities meet the standards to administer COVID-19 vaccine. Additionally, VIDOH is developing contingency plans to support repositioning logistics using both hospitals. Assessments of these plans will be conducted in November.

Section 10: COVID-19 Vaccination Second-Dose Reminders

VIDOH will utilize its Immunization Information System (IIS) to conduct patient reminder recall on second-dose for the vaccines that warrant a follow-up dose for complete immunization cycle. Providers who receive vaccine requiring second-dose will be documented and provided temporary access to the IIS in order to conduct second-dose reminders. Announcements about mass vaccinations will be conducted by VIDOH via IIS. Private providers can also utilize IIS to remind their patients. Additionally, announcements will be rotated in the media through various outlets about mass vaccination clinics.

Section 12: COVID-19 Vaccination Program Communication

VIDOH is developing clear and effective communications that will be employed early, often, and all levels of the response - to ensure the success of VIDOH's COVID-19 Vaccination Program. VIDOH will align the communication plan to CDC's Vaccinate with Confidence Framework. Alignment is critical to ensure the success of not only the COVID-19 vaccine, but all vaccine campaigns for the foreseeable future. VIDOH will develop the communications plan to appreciate the changes in messages across the three phases as well as strong consideration to the needs of those populations. Specifically, in terms of: health equity, plain language, native language, cultural appropriateness, and non-stigmatizing bias-free language. These considerations will be revisited as messages change and adapt over time. VIDOH will utilize radio, television, print/online newspapers, social media platforms, and direct outreach activities as the primary communication channels.

Section 14: COVID-19 Vaccine Safety Monitoring

VIDOH will act quickly to identify, track, and communicate any adverse events following immunization (AEFI) monitored through electronic health records and claims-based systems (e.g., Vaccine Safety Datalink). The Surveillance Coordinator from VIDOH Immunization Program will act as the Vaccine Safety Coordinator.

Section 15: COVID-19 Vaccination Program Monitoring

VIDOH will provide continuous program monitoring of vaccination goals via specific focus on performance targets, resources, staffing, and activities. VIDOH will utilize CDC's dashboards and internal reporting structures to track key indicators. VIDOH will monitor progress using the following metrics: # of providers enrolled/recruited; # of doses received/ distributed / administered / wasted; % vaccination coverage (by first dose, second dose, critical population); % of complete vaccinations (for two dose regimen).