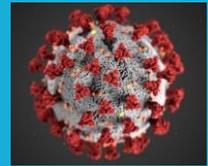


Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands INTERIM COVID-19 VACCINATION PLAN



Executive Summary - DRAFT

October 26, 2020

Introduction

Immunization with a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine is a critical component to reducing COVID-19 related illnesses, hospitalization, and deaths and to support restoration of societal functioning.

The purpose of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' COVID-19 Vaccination Plan is to provide a framework for the effective distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccines. A vaccine will only be used if it is determined to be safe by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the national Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Information on available vaccine doses and epidemiology of the COVID-19 pandemic will determine response priorities, therefore, the plan is designed to be flexible and will be adjusted based on developments and situational updates.

COVID-19 Vaccination Planning Sections:

Phased Approach to COVID-19 Vaccination

It is anticipated that the vaccine supply will be limited at the beginning of the COVID-19 vaccine distribution. Thus, the plan includes scenarios that describe a 3 phased approach for vaccine distribution. Phase 1 of the plan will involve closed Points of Dispensing (PODs) in which vaccination activities will be targeted to serve priority populations. Vaccine supply will increase in Phase 2, which will allow for clinic sites, including pharmacies, to administer to priority populations and allow for opportunities to open up for general public vaccination. In Phase 3, enough vaccines will be available to support routine distribution.

Critical Populations

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), the National Institutes of Health, and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) are working to determine populations of focus for COVID-19 vaccination, which will include priority groups identified to receive the first available doses of vaccine when the initial, limited doses become available. This information will be utilized by the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation and the CNMI COVID-19 Task Force as a guide for finalizing the vaccine allocation framework to ensure that the federal recommendations meet the CNMI's needs.

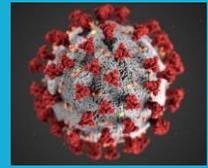
COVID-19 Vaccination Provider Recruitment and Enrollment

The CNMI will leverage existing partnerships with vaccination providers and conduct outreach to non-partner sites as part of recruitment efforts. The CNMI is a small island territory, with a majority of medical providers practicing under the state health department. There are a total of 5 health department outpatient clinics, 5 private clinics, and 3 pharmacies. Providers will be enrolled in an incremental way to ensure that we have access for the priority groups identified in the initial phases and then move towards enrolling a broader group of providers.

COVID-19 Vaccine Storage and Handling

It is expected that cold chain storage and handling requirements for COVID-19 vaccine products will vary in temperature from refrigerated, frozen, and ultra cold.

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Proper storage and handling practices are critical to minimize vaccine loss and ensure effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines. The CNMI will work with providers to ensure appropriate vaccine storage and handling procedures are established and followed. The CNMI will work with providers to ensure that they are trained, assess their storage capacity to ensure reliable vaccine storage and temperature monitoring equipment, and ensure accurate inventory management.

COVID-19 Vaccination Second-Dose Reminders

It is anticipated that COVID-19 vaccinations will administered in 2 doses, either 21 or 28 days apart. Vaccination 2nd dose reminders will be critical for ensuring that community members complete the vaccine series to ensure effectiveness. The CNMI will utilize a data information system that will enable vaccine recipients to pre-register for COVID-19 vaccinations and allow for 2nd dose vaccination reminders. This data system will be linked with the CNMI Immunization Information System, known as WebIz, where vaccine information on the CNMI population is stored.

COVID-19 Vaccination Program Communication

A clear, effective communications strategy will be critical for the CNMI's overall COVID-19 vaccination campaign. Focus will made be on building vaccine confidence broadly and among groups anticipated to receive early vaccination and dispelling vaccine misinformation. Existing partnerships will be leveraged for reaching target populations within CNMI communities.

COVID-19 Vaccine Safety Monitoring

The CNMI will track adverse events related to COVID-19 vaccines as part of safety monitoring and to ensure adequate adverse event follow up. Vaccine safety monitoring will focus on: detecting new, unusual or rare adverse events after vaccination; monitor increases in known side effects; identify potential risk factors for particular types of health problems related to vaccines; assess the safety of newly licensed vaccines; and detect unexpected or unusual patterns in adverse events reports. The CNMI will utilize a protocol for reporting adverse vaccine events which will be included as part of provider or COVID-19 vaccinator training requirements. Reporting information will also be shared via communications activities and made available on the CHCC website.

COVID-19 Vaccination Program Monitoring

Provider enrollment data, critical populations, vaccine distribution and doses administered will be monitored daily in order to continuously assess the needs for vaccine outreach and education efforts. Additionally, data on staffing capacity, supplies, and vaccine messaging activities will be monitored and utilized to guide and/or adjust vaccine efforts and activities to ensure that targets and goals will be met.

Additional Information

Information on COVID-19 in the CNMI can be found at:

<https://www.chcc.gov.mp/coronavirusinformation.php>

<https://governor.gov.mp/covid-19/>