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**Memorandum**

**TO:** Long-Term Care Providers

**FROM:** Margret Cooke, JD, Deputy Commissioner

**SUBJECT:** Vaccination Options for Long Term Care Residents and Staff following the Federal Pharmacy Partnership Program

**DATE:** February 24, 2021

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) continues to work with state, federal and local partners on the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2, and we continue to appreciate the essential role you have in responding to this evolving situation.

Vaccinating long-term care facility residents and staff against COVID-19 is a crucial step in preventing the spread of COVID-19 in long-term care facilities. In order to provide COVID-19 vaccination to long-term care facilities in the most expedient manner, DPH encouraged all facilities to enroll and participate in the Federal Pharmacy Partnership Program (FPPP) where pharmacies conducted three vaccination clinics at each long-term care facility.

With the FPPP third vaccinations clinics currently underway, DPH is providing recommendations to long-term care facilities for obtaining COVID-19 vaccine for residents and staff who did not receive both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

If, after the third FPPP vaccine clinic, a long-term care facility has a **resident who requires a second dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine**, the long-term care facility should obtain a second dose by:

- Contacting DPH to coordinate administration of the second dose of COVID-19 vaccine by an authorized vaccinator from a rapid response team. Please see Attachment A for an overview of this vaccination process

If a long-term care facility has **residents who require the first and second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine** or has a resident who requires the second dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, the long-term care facility should obtain the vaccine by:

- Contacting the facility's long-term care pharmacy to provide the necessary COVID-19 vaccine to the long-term care facility.

In order to offer facility-based vaccination, a long-term care facility must:

- Sign up for the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS) at: <https://www.miisresourcecenter.com/>
- Enroll in the Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccination Program (MCVP) at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-covid-19-vaccine-program-mcvp-overview>
- Review instructions on storage and handling, and administering the vaccine: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/guidance-for-healthcare-providers-and-organizations-0/download>

Long-term care facility **staff** in need of COVID-19 vaccine should make an appointment at one of the mass vaccination sites, retail pharmacy sites or regional vaccination sites. Specific site locations may be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine>.

As a reminder, it is the responsibility of the vaccinator to report vaccine side effects to FDA/CDC Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS).

The VAERS toll-free number is 1-800-822-7967 or report online to <https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html>.

Please visit DPH's website that provides up-to-date information on COVID-19 and vaccine efforts in Massachusetts: <https://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus> and <https://www.mass.gov/vaccine>.

## Attachment A – Process for Obtaining Second Dose of Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine from DPH

When a long-term care facility resident has received the first dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine the long-term care facility may arrange for the second dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine by following the below process:

- At least one week prior to the administration of the second dose of vaccine, the long-term care facility must contact DPH at the following email address [dph.bhcsq@mass.gov](mailto:dph.bhcsq@mass.gov) and provide the number of residents and date(s) of the first dose of vaccine.
- Upon receiving notification from the long-term care facility that the resident is in need of a second Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, DPH will confirm that the long-term care facility is enrolled in the Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccine Program (MCVP) and will work with the long-term care facility to schedule a date for resident vaccination and ensure that there is a provider order for the vaccine.
- On the scheduled date, an authorized vaccinator from the rapid response team will arrive at the long-term care facility, confirm the provider order for vaccination, vaccinate the resident, and monitor the resident after vaccination for any adverse effects. The long-term care facility is responsible for reporting any adverse events into VAERS.
- Upon vaccination of the resident, the long-term care facility will be responsible for all reporting requirements in the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS).