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Memorandum

TO: Long-Term Care Facilities
Long-Term Care Pharmacies

FROM: Margret Cooke, JD, Deputy Commissioner
David Sencabaugh, R.Ph., Director, Board of Registration in Pharmacy

SUBJECT: Vaccination of Long-Term Care Residents and Staff following the Federal Pharmacy Partnership Program

DATE: March 26, 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.

DPH released guidance to long-term care facilities on February 24, 2021 with recommendations to long-term care facilities for obtaining COVID-19 vaccine for residents who did not receive the COVID-19 vaccine through the FPPP, including the long-term care facility contacting its long-term care pharmacy to provide the necessary vaccine to the facility.

In order for a long-term care pharmacy to receive and then dispense COVID-19 vaccine to long-term care facilities, the pharmacy must:

- Register with the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS). Information on the MIIS may be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-immunization-information-system-miis>
- Complete the Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccine Program (MCVP) Agreement. Information on registering for MCVP may be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-covid-19-vaccine-program-mcvp-guidance-for-vaccine-providers-and>

- Dispense the COVID-19 vaccine in accordance with [Board policies](#) and must not distribute the COVID-19 vaccine as non-patient specific stock medication; and
- Comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Before contacting the pharmacy, long-term care facilities must ensure that there are sufficient residents in need of COVID-19 vaccine in order to prevent vaccine waste.

- If the pharmacy is dispensing vials of Moderna vaccine then the long-term care facility must ensure there are a multiple of 10 residents in need of COVID-19 vaccine.
- If the pharmacy is dispensing vials of Janssen vaccine then the long-term care facility must ensure there are a multiple of 5 residents in need of COVID-19 vaccine.

Vaccines dispensed by a long-term care pharmacy to a long-term care facility must be used for vaccination of residents. A long-term care pharmacy may administer the vaccine to the long-term care facility residents if the pharmacy employs authorized vaccinators. Otherwise, the long-term care facility will be responsible for the administration of the COVID-19 vaccine, monitoring the resident after vaccination for any adverse events and for all reporting requirements in the MIIS. Every time the long-term care pharmacy dispenses vaccine to a long-term care facility, the pharmacy is responsible for transferring the dispensed doses in MIIS to the receiving facility. In order to transfer the dispensed doses in MIIS, the long-term care pharmacy will need to obtain the long-term care facility's MIIS Provider Identification Number (MIIS PIN). The long-term care pharmacy is responsible for ensuring that the long-term care facility documents vaccines administered to residents in MIIS.

Long-term care pharmacies must review the Weekly COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Bulletin and comply with its contents, including any thresholds for vaccine usage, to continue to receive allocations. The most recent bulletin may be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/weekly-covid-19-vaccine-provider-bulletin-3212021/download>

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>