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Memorandum

TO: Long-Term Care Providers

FROM: Elizabeth Kelley, MBA, MPH, Director
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality

SUBJECT: Vaccination Options for Long Term Care Residents, Staff and Visitors

DATE: June 8, 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, staff and visitors 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.

This memorandum replaces the memorandum issued on April 12, 2021 and now permits visitors to receive a first or second dose of COVID-19 vaccine at the long-term care facility.

DPH is providing recommendations to long-term care facilities for obtaining COVID-19 vaccine for residents, staff and visitors who are not fully vaccinated.

If, 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, staff or visitors who require the first and second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine** or has a resident, staff member or visitor 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.

The long-term care facility is responsible for the administration of the COVID-19 vaccine, monitoring the resident, staff member or visitor after vaccination for any adverse events and for all reporting requirements in the MIIS. 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 may also make an appointment at one of 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. Online reporting is available at the following page: <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 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).