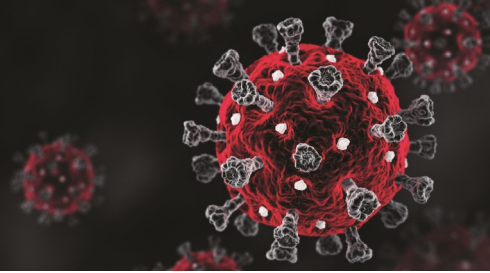


Vax Matters



February 5, 2021



News

Federal Retail Pharmacy Program to Launch

An additional federal retail pharmacy program will launch next week through the state's continued partnership with Rite Aid and CVS.

As Governor Murphy outlined in a [press briefing Wednesday](#), since most Americans live within five miles of a pharmacy, the new program will expand the state's footprint in areas of high need and is poised to receive direct allocation from the federal government without tapping into the state's supply.

Vaccine Education Focus of Project ECHO Forum

NJDOH and Rutgers Project ECHO recently held a Vaccine Education webinar as part of a COVID-19 ECHO series targeting community health workers and other frontline workers.

The session featured Dr. Meg Fisher, Special Advisor to NJDOH Commissioner Persichilli; Denise V. Rodgers, MD, Vice Chancellor for Interprofessional Programs, Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences; Lisa Asare, NJDOH Assistant Commissioner; Dorothy Reed, Program Management Officer, NJDOH Division of Family Health Services; Brandie Wooding, Nurse Consultant, NJDOH Population Health; and Marie Kinsella, Community Health Worker Supervisor, The Partnership for Maternal and Child Health of Northern N.J.

[Click here](#) to view a video of the session.

A Day in the Life of the State's Vaccination Megasites

The state's six regional megasites can vaccinate thousands each week – on Thursday, the sites vaccinated over 10,000 that day. As vaccine availability increases, the sites will be able to scale up even more. Running a megasite smoothly to meet the demand requires teamwork and deft coordination.

“Putting together a mass vaccination site is a huge undertaking that requires collaboration and many hours of hard work,” New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) Commissioner Judith Persichilli has said.

Staff begins arriving early, typically between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. depending on their role. Site hours are generally 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. but days and hours can vary by site.

The six sites are located in [Atlantic](#), [Bergen](#), [Burlington](#), [Gloucester](#), [Middlesex](#) and [Morris](#) counties.

The **staff** is a mix of healthcare professionals from the site's healthcare partner, or, in Gloucester, from the county health department; National Guard; representatives from NJDOH, state Office of Emergency Management and State Police; and some volunteers. In addition, there are administration staff from the healthcare partner, security and also a full medical team onsite in case of an adverse reaction.



A vaccine dose is readied at the Meadowlands megasite.

Appointments for the day have already been scheduled in advance. Except for the Gloucester County megasite, where appointments can be made via the [New Jersey Vaccine Scheduling System](#), the other sites have their own registration portals.

Doors open

As individuals enter, they are greeted by the National Guard or other staff who will check their name against the roster of appointments, take their temperature and guide them to the **registration** area.

When individuals are registered, they are given a QR code which is scanned at each point in the process and helps the site keep track of people. Tracking the flow will help the site make modifications if needed to improve operations.

Individuals then move to the **vaccination area** where they will be asked a few medical questions. Once they have cleared the medical questions, it is time to roll up their sleeve and receive their COVID-19 vaccination.

After being vaccinated, individuals move to an observation area for 15 minutes or, if they have previously had an adverse reaction to medicine, are observed for 30 minutes. In between vaccinations, staff moves in to disinfect all areas.

Checking out

After **observation**, the National Guard assists to check out the newly vaccinated, who are expected to return to the same site for their second dose.

All in all, the whole process should be done within an hour. Virtua Health, the healthcare partner in the Burlington County megasite, even put together a [video](#) walking viewers through the process. By day's end, as operations close down, a cleaning crew goes through each site getting it ready for a new day of vaccinating the public.

Vaccination Safety, Rollout Among Topics in NJDOH Video Podcast Series

A new video podcast series by NJDOH debuted this week and is addressing the importance of vaccination across communities.

Saving Lives in New Jersey: The COVID-19 Vaccine and You is hosted by Dr. Meg Fisher, a pediatric infectious disease consultant and special advisor to Health Commissioner Persichilli.

The first installment featured a discussion on the importance of COVID-19 vaccination and hesitancy among workers in long-term care settings with Lisa Williams, Executive Director, Maplewood Senior Living at Princeton, and Chair of the Assisted Living Council, Health Care Association of New Jersey.

"We've done a lot of town hall meetings so that the staff can ask questions as far as the vaccine is concerned," Ms. Williams explained of outreach efforts in the video. "It really was the responsibility of the leadership of the facilities to educate the staff as far as the importance of the vaccine and answer any questions they might have because it was a lot of the fear of the unknown as far as the vaccine was concerned."

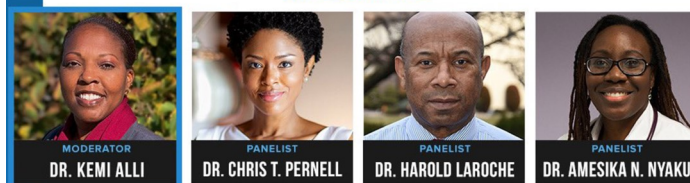
The five-part video podcast series will be posted on social media and the [NJDOH YouTube channel](#) on Mondays. Please help to share these podcasts with your network.

Future podcasts will focus on vaccine distribution in New Jersey; vaccine development, safety and efficacy; maintaining COVID-19 health and safety personal behaviors; and the importance of vaccinating seniors. The series is part of the state's vaccination public awareness efforts.



Lisa Williams, left, and Dr. Meg Fisher

NJDOH COVID-19 Vaccination Outreach Efforts Include February Virtual Town Halls



NJDOH is hosting two virtual town hall meetings this month led by New Jersey medical professionals to address facts, fears and myths about COVID-19 vaccines for communities across the state.

Pre-registration is required.

The first, on Feb. 11, will present information and address concerns for New Jersey's Black and Caribbean communities.

The discussion will be moderated by Dr. Kemi Alli, CEO, Henry J. Austin Health Center in Trenton, and will feature: Dr. Chris T. Pernell, Chief Strategic Integration and Health Equity Officer at University Hospital in Newark; Dr.

Amesika Nyaku, Infectious Disease, Rutgers Health in Newark; and Dr. Harold LaRoche, an ER staff physician with JFK Medical in Edison and Chapter President of Haitian Physicians Abroad.

Click here to register: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1577234449455960077>.

A second town hall on Feb. 15 will provide information for New Jersey's Latinx communities. The meeting will be in English with a Spanish language version to be scheduled.

This discussion will be led by Amanda Medina-Forrester, Executive Director of NJDOH's Office of Minority and Multi-cultural Health, and will feature: Dr. Marcella Perez, board-certified family medicine physician at Zufall Health Center, Morristown; Gina Miranda-Diaz, an ANCC board-certified advanced public health nurse; and Luis Espina, MD, a board-certified family practice provider with RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group.

To register, visit: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/565691448483659789>.

Both town halls will be available for later viewing on the [NJDOH YouTube channel](#). Stay tuned for other virtual events.

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