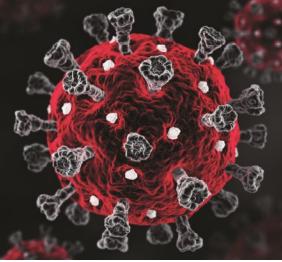


# Vax Matters



December 11, 2020



## In the News

### Canada OKs Pfizer Vaccine

[Canada is the latest country to approve](#) Pfizer's coronavirus vaccine, with vaccinations potentially beginning next week. Britain and Bahrain had earlier granted emergency use of the Pfizer vaccine. Britain began administering it this week.

### Op-Ed: Congressman Kim on COVID-19 Vaccine

In an [op-ed in The Star-Ledger/NJ.com](#), U.S. Rep. Andy Kim shares his views of the COVID-19 vaccine approval process and writes "If this process is executed in full as designed, I will have no hesitation taking the vaccine myself."

### Vaccine Video Conferences for N.J. Healthcare Workers

Rutgers Project ECHO is hosting a series of video sessions with NJDOH to answer questions from healthcare workers and provide updates on the vaccination rollout plan.

Phase 1A includes paid and unpaid persons serving in healthcare settings and long-term care facilities.

The series began Dec. 11, and continues Dec. 14, Dec. 18, and Dec. 21.

[Learn more and register](#) for one of the events.

### FDA to Move 'Rapidly' Toward Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine OK

[The U.S. Food and Drug Administration said Friday](#) it will "rapidly work" toward finalizing and issuing an emergency use authorization for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

The statement follows a meeting of the Vaccine and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) on Dec 10, which voted 17-4 with one abstention to recommend that the FDA issue the authorization of the vaccine in individuals 16 years of age and older.

In its statement, the FDA also said it had notified the CDC and Operation Warp Speed in order for them to execute their plans for timely vaccine distribution.

After the EUA is issued, six hospitals in New Jersey will receive pre-positioned doses. The state is continuing to prepare for receipt of the vaccines and is working closely with these hospitals to ensure workers can be vaccinated as soon as possible.

The initial supply to New Jersey will be about 76,000 doses. The initial population to receive the vaccine during Phase 1A will be healthcare personnel, who are defined as paid and unpaid persons serving in healthcare settings, as well as long-term care residents (*see more on Page 2*).

With additional doses coming in the following weeks, it is hoped that the approval of the Moderna vaccine won't be far behind.

[In a briefing document for the VRBPAC meeting](#), FDA scientists described the efficacy of the vaccine in preventing confirmed COVID-19 beginning seven days after the second vaccination as 95% and also outlined safety data.

### Survey: Interim Safety Reports Influence Healthcare Provider Views

Eighty-five percent of physicians and 66% of nurses said they "definitely would" or "probably would" plan to take the COVID-19 vaccine, according to a new survey conducted by NJDOH.

This survey follows an October survey conducted by NJDOH to better understand their intentions to personally receive the COVID-19 vaccine, recommend the vaccine to their patients, and what information would influence these decisions.

In the October survey, 66% of physicians and 47% of nurses said they "definitely would" or "probably would" take the vaccine.

NJDOH repeated the survey to detect any changes in sentiment after Pfizer and Moderna (the two manufacturers likely to be the first to receive FDA Emergency Use Authorizations for COVID-19 vaccines) released their Phase 3 clinical trial interim analysis reports in November touting efficacy rates above 90%.

In the new survey, 77% of physicians plan to recommend the COVID-19 vaccine to their patients, compared to 46% in October. Nurses responded 60% and 35%, respectively.

A new question asked, after hearing the interim efficacy reports, would physicians recommend the vaccine to family, friends and colleagues: 77% of physicians responded affirmatively compared to 56% of the nurses.

The November survey included 3,320 respondents compared to 2,056 in October. It is unknown how many were participants in both surveys.

OVER  
**65,000 CALLERS**  
Helped by the COVID-19 Hotline  
at the  
New Jersey Poison Control Center

For NJ Residents  
Poison Calls ONLY: 1-800-222-1222  
Coronavirus Calls ONLY: 1-800-962-1253

New Jersey  
Poison Center  
[www.njpois.org](http://www.njpois.org)

## As New Jersey Prepares For Vaccine Rollout, Who May Get Vaccinated During Phase 1A?

New Jersey will roll out COVID-19 vaccines step-by-step to serve all who live, work or study in the state. New Jersey's phasing will ensure that limited vaccines are distributed in a fair and equitable manner.

Beginning as soon as next week, New Jersey will start vaccinating Phase 1A. This phase includes healthcare workers, who are paid and unpaid persons serving in healthcare settings who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials. New Jersey will start by fortifying hospitals, including prioritizing those at highest risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Phase 1A includes any type of worker or volunteer within a healthcare environment, for example: clinical staff, food service workers in hospitals, receptionists in dialysis centers, EMTs, home health aides, licensed professionals in Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), and many others. Examples of unpaid healthcare workers include health professional students, trainees, volunteers and essential caregivers.

Phase 1A will also include long-term care residents, who are adults who live in facilities that provide a range of services, including medical and personal care, to persons who are unable to live independently. Many of our vulnerable long-term care facilities will be served on-site through the CDC-supported Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care.



Informed by [CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program Interim Playbook](#) (Sept. 16, 2020), [CDC MMWR](#), [ACIP](#) Prioritization work group considerations

## Executive Order 207 Aimed At Boosting Efficiency of Two-Dose Vaccine

With two-dose regimens required for the current COVID-19 vaccines under review, there is a need to track participation to ensure that each consumer receives the same type of vaccine at the correct second dose interval.

To help achieve that goal, Governor Murphy recently signed Executive Order 207 in preparation for the arrival of COVID-19 vaccines to New Jersey.

Under [EO No. 207](#), residents who decide to receive a COVID-19 vaccine will now automatically be enrolled in the New Jersey Immunization Information System (NJIIS), the statewide automated and electronic immunization registry.

The change is aimed at maximizing efficacy and efficiency. Without proper accounting, patient safety issues may arise if a consumer receives doses from two different novel vaccines. Inconsistent reporting was a key barrier to the H1N1 response.

"Accurate accounting of every dose of vaccine is vital to monitoring implementation progress of New Jersey's vaccination plan," said NJDOH Commissioner Judith Persichilli. "The system will also allow us to ensure residents are returning for the second dose of vaccine."

Under EO No. 207, individuals may opt-out of the registry 30 days after the public health emergency expires.

## Resources

[NJDOH COVID-19 Vaccination Page](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccination Plan at a Glance](#)

[Understanding COVID-19 Vaccine: Information for Health Care Workers](#)

[Sign up for the Vax Matters newsletter.](#)