



MOA Immediate Past President Merideth Norris, DO, who runs a private practice in Kennebunk, received her COVID-19 vaccine at SMHC this week.

Maine DHHS, MMA, and MOA Collaborate to Offer COVID-19 Vaccine to Community Medical Practice Personnel

January 8th, 2021, via E-Newsletter

Key Points:

- *Maine DHHS is now on Phase 1a, Group 1, of its vaccination plan, which includes all outpatient acute care practices
- *The MMA and MOA have stepped forward to help coordinate administration
- ***Reach out to MOA staff, if you haven't already. They will help coordinate a vaccination site for you and your staff ASAP**

The State of Maine is working to vaccinate all eligible Maine residents as soon as possible. Maine is in the fourth week of vaccinations and has received just over 81,000 doses from the federal government—which covers roughly 6 percent of state residents.

To date, the State has been guided by recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) on how to allocate this limited supply.

Maine DHHS further refined Phase 1a to include in these coming weeks an outline of three groups within Phase 1a, including Group 1: Health Care Personnel Needed to Preserve Critical Health Care Services. This includes paid and unpaid personnel, including both clinicians and support staff, who physically work in hospitals, acute care settings, urgent care centers, Emergency Medical Services, or home health on a regular basis and have direct contact with patients, or have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials. Group 1 also includes outpatient clinicians and their staff who provide care to patients at risk of hospitalization such as providers in medical practices providing acute care, dialysis centers, and oncology practices.

The MOA and MMA have stepped forward to help coordinate vaccinations for medical practice providers and patient-facing staff who are within Phase 1a, Group 1 as noted above.

Specifically, the MMA and MOA have each engaged independent member practices to compile a needs assessment of the number and location of patient-facing clinicians and staff to vaccinate. In addition, a number of health systems, community hospitals, federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), and larger independent physician locations have begun to reach out to community physicians. With this needs assessment, the MMA and MOA can connect patient-facing personnel with sites able to vaccinate them. This process should provide access to COVID-19 vaccines for physicians and their patient-facing staff, over the coming weeks, recognizing that this will depend on the supply of vaccine Maine receives from the federal government as well as throughput at vaccination sites.

If you have already reached out to the MOA for help in getting COVID vaccine for your practice, you should be contacted very soon with information on organizations in your area that you can contact for vaccine administration. If you have not already made a request, please reach out as soon as possible by contacting Amanda Richards, Executive Director at arichards@mainedo.org or 207-623-1101. When making your request, please include the name and location of your practice; the total number of providers and practice staff who need to be vaccinated; and the name, phone and email of the appropriate contact at your practice.

"It is our duty to ensure that Maine's physicians and their staff in all settings have access to COVID-19 vaccines so that they can continue to care for Mainers," says MOA President David Scaccia, D.O., MPH, "These are unprecedented circumstances, and therefore the process will be imperfect, but we are committed to working together to get it right."