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May 12, 2021

**TO:** Points of Dispensing participating in the COVID-19 Vaccination Program

**FROM:** Judith M. Persichilli, R.N., B.S.N., M.A. Commissioner 

**SUBJECT:** Expansion of Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine to Ages 12 and Older

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**Points of Dispensing (PODs) can immediately begin administration of the Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine to persons 12 years of age and older.**

On Monday, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a revised Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) and, today, the the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) adopted the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) recommendations for the expanded age group.

This memo serves to alert you to the expanded use of the Pfizer vaccine in New Jersey's COVID-19 vaccination effort. **Please share this information with appropriate staff in your vaccination program.**

Thank you for your partnership in this initiative. This memo supplements the other materials circulated by NJDOH regarding the provision, delivery and administration of COVID-19 vaccines. [https://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/topics/covid2019\\_vaccination.shtml](https://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/topics/covid2019_vaccination.shtml). Points of Dispensing may contact the New Jersey Department of Health Vaccine Operations Center at [Vax.Operations@doh.nj.gov](mailto:Vax.Operations@doh.nj.gov) with any further questions.

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Eligible population

COVID-19 vaccination sites in New Jersey may offer the Pfizer vaccine to persons aged 12 and older immediately.

Federal recommendation

On Monday, May 10, the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) issued a revised Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) with updated fact sheets for patients/caregivers and for providers.

- Updated EUA: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144412/download>
- Updated EUA Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144413/download>
- Updated EUA Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers: <https://www.fda.gov/media/144414/download>

- Translations of the Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers: <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine>

Today (May 12), the CDC adopted the ACIP recommendations for the expanded age group.

- More detail on today's ACIP meeting can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/meetings/slides-2021-05-12.html>
- ACIP recommendations will be posted in the *Mortality and Morbidity Weekly Report* (MMWR) on Friday, May 14: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/index.html>

#### Provider education

Please ensure vaccination providers are well versed in the updated vaccine information, provider fact sheet, and clinical considerations. We expect providers to be prepared to address questions from their patients and their families about the Pfizer vaccine. These will be made available here:

- <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/pfizer/index.html>

#### Consumer education

Points of dispensing play a critical role in building trust in vaccination. There are many resources for age-appropriate engagement about COVID-19 vaccination:

- CDC's dedicated webpage with information on adolescent vaccination and pediatrician toolkit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>
- CDC's Toolkit for Medical Centers, Clinics, and Clinicians: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid19/health-systems-communicationtoolkit.html>
- CDC's Engaging in Effective COVID-19 Vaccine Conversations: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid19/hcp/engaging-patients.htm>

#### Informed consent

Each patient must receive the updated Pfizer vaccine information, including the revised EUA patient fact sheet. For minors under age 18, the EUA fact sheet for caregivers must be provided to the parents/guardians in advance of administration. These are available in multiple languages here:

- <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine>

Informed consent must be obtained from a parent/guardian in order for the minor to be vaccinated. For example, informed consent can be obtained:

- a. By the parent/guardian verbally consenting on-site to the minor receiving the vaccine,
- b. By the parent/guardian verbally consenting in-advance or verbally consents from off-site to the minor receiving the vaccine,
- c. By a parent/guardian signing on-site an informed consent form, or
- d. By a parent/guardian signing in-advance an informed consent form.

Points of dispensing are encouraged to minimize barriers to entry and to honor all of the above formats for collecting informed consent. There is no federal- or state-mandated form.

Points of Dispensing should follow existing laws regarding consent for minors for medical procedures. Each POD should consult with their own legal counsel regarding the facility's specific policies and procedures for consent.

Co-administration

ACIP now recommends that COVID-19 and other vaccines may now be administered without regard to timing. This includes administration of COVID-19 and other vaccines on the same day, as well as co-administration within 14 days.

All of 'Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States' can be found here:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html>