

## PRESS RELEASE

**TO:** Marquette County Media

**FROM:** Marquette County Health Department

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**DATE:** December 3, 2020

**SUBJECT:** **COVID Vaccine**

We are all waiting for safe and effective COVID vaccines and based on the current evidence, they are really close. When vaccines are authorized/approved in the United States, there will not be enough doses available for all adults initially. Therefore, an allocation plan is being finalized by CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) which will be followed nationally.

When devising and later approving the plan, ACIP follows general ethical principles of:

- a. Maximizing benefits and minimizing harm
- b. Mitigating health inequities
- c. Justice
- d. Transparency

Based on these ethical principles, a phased approach is recommended. The first phase *may* look something like this:

**Phase 1a:**

- Healthcare personnel (paid or unpaid, including EMS, first responders, long-term care personnel)
- Long-term care facility residents

**Phase 1b:**

- Essential workers (examples: education sector, food and agriculture, utilities, police, firefighters, corrections officers, transportation)

**Phase 1c:**

- Adults with high-risk medical conditions
- Adults 65 years and older

It is currently thought the initial allocation throughout the nation, possibly later in December or early January, will not be sufficient for the proposed 1a “Jumpstart Phase” consisting of healthcare personnel and long-term care facility residents. Therefore, additional rationing will be needed initially. The logistics of this is currently being planned and finalized by the CDC which will be followed by the States and then locally.

Large populations will be competing for limited doses of the first vaccines to reach the market. The overlap in the priority groups listed in phase 1a, b, and c are substantial. The CDC staff estimates:

- 21 million people would fall into the healthcare personnel category
- 87 million people in the essential workers group
- More than 100 million adults in the United States, such as those with diabetes and cancers, fall into the high-risk medical conditions group.
- 53 million people are aged 65 and older.

If all goes as expected, Pfizer and Moderna vaccines will be approved by the FDA and later by CDC’s ACIP (Advisory Committee for Immunization Practice) in mid-December which will outline all of the information needed for our medical care teams to start the process of vaccination. It is expected other vaccines will be reviewed and approved in 2021 as well.

Moderna expects by the end of this year to have approximately 20 million doses of its vaccine available to the United States and that it is on track to manufacture 500 million to 1 billion doses globally in 2021. Pfizer and BioNTech expects to produce globally up to 50 million doses in 2020 (of which 20 million available to the United States) and up to 1.3 billion doses by the end of 2021. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar stated on November 18 that the federal government expects to have about 40 million doses of these two vaccines by the end of December, which is enough to provide the two-dose regimen for about 20 million.

The U.P. Health Departments, working in conjunction with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and your local medical providers and facilities, are outlining the logistics of distribution of the vaccine, given the expected initial limited supplies, which is no small task. The combined efforts of your private and public medical care providers, with assistance from their local public health experts and many others in the community, will make this enormous project a success.

It is expected enough vaccine will eventually be available for ALL, but this will take time—estimates for the low risk adults starting April-June of 2021 followed by our pediatric population sometime thereafter.

We will keep you informed of our plan—who, when, where, and how, as soon as it is known. We appreciate your patience.

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