



Dear Residents, Families and Loved Ones,

We are pleased to announce that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted to include long-term care residents as a highest-priority group for the first distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine. This group includes skilled nursing residents, assisted living residents, and residents in other care settings.

Our residents and health care workers are included in Tier 1A phased distribution, which begins mid-December 2020 and ends mid-January 2021:

- Thirty-one thousand vaccines are planned for delivery the week of **December 14**.
- An additional 94,000 vaccines will be distributed the week of **December 21**.
- During the week of **December 28**, another 51,000 vaccinations will be distributed.
- In the weeks leading up to **January 2021**, a total of 176,000 vaccines will be distributed.
- By the **end of January 2021**, a total of 380,000 first-time vaccinations are expected to be delivered.

The COVID-19 vaccination process will include a two-dose regimen. Skilled nursing facilities have partnered with either CVS or Walgreens, which will serve as intermediaries in the distribution process. Currently, Moderna and Pfizer have vaccines being considered for distribution; both vaccines are messenger RNA based (mRNA) vaccines.

Messenger RNA turns a patient's cells into factories that make one particular coronavirus protein. That protein kicks off an immune response as if there was a real coronavirus infection. However, because there is only one protein, there is no way the vaccine could infect someone or make them sick with COVID-19. If an immunized person is later exposed to COVID-19, their body's immune response will be able to fight it off more easily, and they are more likely to avoid serious illness. Further information about both vaccines can be found on the CDC website or the pharmaceutical companies' websites.

We will have more details about the specific vaccines available and distribution schedules in our area in the coming days. We will also be sending out consent forms similar to the influenza vaccine consents for our residents to responsible parties. Given the seriousness of this pandemic, we request that you urgently process the consent forms and return them to the facility.

Although these vaccines are new, their efficacy is reported to be in the mid-90-percentile, and side effects have been minor, including a sore injection site, and in some, a brief fever following vaccination.

We urge you to provide permission for your loved one to receive one of these crucial vaccines to protect our vulnerable population.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Spenard".

Ann Spenard, Chief Clinical Officer