March 4, 2021

Dear COVID-19 Vaccine Providers,

Please take note of these two important updates:

1) As of March 2, 2021, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has directed that those who work in pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools, as well as Head Start and Early Head Start programs (including teachers, staff, and bus drivers) and those who work as or for licensed child care providers, including center-based and family care providers, are eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations.
   - Please do not displace appointments that have been made by people in Phase 1a to make room for school and daycare staff. However, if appointments are available, school and daycare staff can be scheduled now.
   - Please do not use 2nd dose vaccines for 1st dose appointments for school and daycare staff.
   - Read the HHS Secretary’s Directive here.

2) As of March 8, 2021, South Carolina will move to Phase 1b of the COVID-19 vaccination rollout. Per the guidelines of Phase 1b, the following groups of people will qualify to be vaccinated:
   - Anyone aged 55 and up
   - People with increased risk for severe COVID-19 disease
      - People aged 16-54 with one or more of the following high-risk medical conditions:
         - Cancer (current, not a history of cancer), chronic kidney disease (any stage), chronic lung disease, diabetes (Type 1 and Type 2), Down syndrome, heart disease (congestive heart disease, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathy, pulmonary hypertension), HIV/AIDS, solid organ transplant, obesity (BMI >30), pregnancy, sickle cell disease.
         - People who have a developmental or other severe high-risk disability that makes developing severe life-threatening illness or death from COVID-19 infection more likely
   - Frontline workers with increased occupational risk
      - Frontline workers with increased occupational risk are people who:
         - Must be in-person at their place of work, and
         - Perform a job that puts them at increased risk of exposure due to their frequent, close (less than 6 feet) and ongoing (more than 15 minutes) contact with others in the work environment
         - Examples of frontline workers include but are not limited to school staff and daycare workers, manufacturing workers, grocery store workers, law enforcement officers, etc.
   - Individuals at increased risk in settings where people are living and working in close contact
- Residents and workers in group home settings for the mentally or physically disabled or those with behavioral or substance abuse conditions
- Workers and residents in homeless shelters
- Workers and residents in community training homes
- State and local correctional facility staff with direct inmate contact
- Correctional and immigration detention facility inmates
- Migrant farmworkers living in shared housing or reliant on shared transportation

- All workers in healthcare and community health settings who have routine, direct patient contact and were not vaccinated in Phase 1a

If you have questions, please send them to COVIDVaccines@dhec.sc.gov.