

Date: September 9, 2021
To: Iowa Healthcare Partners
From: Iowa Department of Public Health
RE: COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Dose Planning for Long-Term Care and Assisted Living Facilities

Background

On August 18, 2021, Health and Human Services (HHS) public health and medical experts released a joint statement on the plan for COVID-19 booster doses for all Americans beginning the week of September 20, 2021. At that time, individuals who were the first to be vaccinated, including many health care providers, nursing home residents, and other seniors, will likely be eligible for a booster.

Evidence has shown over time vaccines provide less protection against mild and moderate COVID-19 disease in certain populations. People at higher risk or who were vaccinated during the earlier phases of the vaccination rollout may require a booster dose to continue to have the maximum protection the vaccines provide. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) will continue to meet and review data on the evolution of the pandemic and the use of COVID-19 vaccines. ACIP will make further recommendations on the use of boosters for the public after a thorough review of the evidence. **Approval from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and ACIP is necessary for the U.S. to begin administering booster doses.**

IDPH Planning Assumptions

- Sufficient supplies of Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines are available to administer the COVID-19 vaccine booster dose to all individuals who have completed the vaccine primary series. Priority groups for the purpose of booster doses will NOT be utilized.
- CDC has informed states, contracts with the Long Term Care Pharmacies (CVS and Walgreens) will not be renewed to administer booster doses. The Iowa Department of Public Health is working with Local Public Health Agencies (LPHAs), professional associations (Iowa Health Care Association, LeadingAge Iowa, Iowa Assisted Living Association, Iowa Pharmacy Association and the Iowa Board of Pharmacy), and Hy-Vee to ensure COVID-19 booster vaccination for LTC/ALF residents and staff.
- Iowa LTC/ALFs will use the following options, one or a combination, to vaccinate LTC residents and staff:
 - LPHAs will order and administer booster doses of COVID-19 vaccine.
 - Utilize contract pharmacies to order and administer booster doses of COVID-19 vaccine.
 - Utilize Hy-vee to order and administer booster doses of COVID-19 vaccine. The Department has been in communication with Hy-Vee to assist with coordination and administration of booster doses in SNF/ALF. Coordination with Hy-Vee relieves LPHAs and contract pharmacies of the responsibility to coordinate boost vaccine dose needs for LTC facilities, including ordering, administration, and redistribution. If a facility has not had contact from Hy-Vee, they may reach out to: Vaccineclinic@hy-vee.com.
 - LPHAs and LTC/ALFs have the discretion to use these options to determine the best method to administer COVID-19 vaccine booster doses to residents and staff.