



**TO: Media**

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### **Vaccination Information for the North Country**

**Whitefield, NH** – With the recent inception of COVID-19 vaccine administration throughout the United States, questions have arisen as to when North Country residents can anticipate having the option of being vaccinated.

As they have since the pandemic's start, North Country Healthcare (NCH) and its affiliates have worked closely with the NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division of Public Health Services (DPHS), and Bureau of Infectious Disease Control, Immunization Program, following their guidelines, as well as those established by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The Department of Health and Human Services has developed a tiered vaccination program, which identifies who is eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine (based on supply) and when. The segments, detailed below, are designed to best ensure that those who can provide health care to others in need, are available, healthy and able to do so.

#### ***Phase 1a (estimated timeframe: through January):***

- High-risk health workers\*
- First responders
- Long term care residents

\*Such at-risk health workers include, but are not limited to, those within acute, rehabilitation and psychiatric hospitals; nursing homes and assisted living facilities; home health and hospice; and ambulatory care settings.

Following the conclusion of Phase 1a, the vaccine is then available for administration to those individuals who are comprised of ***Phase 1b (through March, as supply allows):***

- Individuals 75 years of age or older

- The medically vulnerable at *significantly* higher risk, including family caregivers for those under the age of 16
- Staff and residents of facilities for those with intellectual or developmental disabilities
- Corrections officers and staff

**Phase 2A (estimated timeframe: March – May)** of COVID-19 vaccine distribution is comprised of:

- Individuals aged 65-74 years old
- Kindergarten through grade 12 school and childcare staff

**Phase 2B (estimated timeframe: March - May)** of COVID-19 vaccine distribution is comprised of:

- Individuals aged 50-65 years old

**Phase 3A (estimated timeframe: May – Beyond):**

- Medically vulnerable individuals up to and including the age of 49 years old at *moderate* risk.

**Phase 3b (estimated timeframe: May and Beyond):**

Everyone else not already vaccinated

“At North Country Healthcare, we appreciate everyone’s enthusiasm and desire to receive the COVID-19 vaccination, as soon as possible,” commented Ed Laverty, PA-C, Chair, North Country Incident Command. “However, in these early days of vaccine administration, we are faced with too low a quantity to move through all phases as quickly as we would like. The supply being received is simply insufficient to meet demand, at this time. We implore everyone to please be as patient as possible and know that we will continue to administer the vaccine to everyone, according to the tiered priority, as quickly as we can.”

NCH continues to collaborate with numerous agencies including the North Country Regional Public Health Network, with a primary goal of additional future vaccination access, via the formation of a fixed site clinic within our geographic region to supplement the regional Point of Distribution clinics established in the Colebrook, Gorham and Lancaster communities.

Please visit <http://www.nh.gov/covid19> for ongoing details as they develop.

For more information about COVID-19, including information about the vaccine, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/>