



Eric J. Holcomb
Governor

Kristina M. Box, MD, FACOG
State Health Commissioner

March 3, 2021

Dear Provider:

The Indiana Department of Health appreciates the partnership and collaboration across the state with our providers to address COVID-19 testing, management, and now immunization.

You may be aware that CMO Dr. Lindsay Weaver worked with our external advisory committee of experts to establish the eligibility categories for allocation of vaccine during the initial phases of this response. Our phase 1A included healthcare professionals, first responders and long-term care residents and staff.

We are now in phase 1B, which included our most vulnerable populations. We have started vaccinating individuals with the highest risk comorbidity, which is an individual's age, and have been reducing the age eligibility every 1-2 weeks. Soon we will be down to 50 and above. At that point we will have accounted for 80% of the COVID-19 hospitalizations and almost 98% of deaths in Indiana.

We have also identified several other comorbidities, such as solid organ transplant, individuals receiving dialysis, individuals who have sickle cell disease and individuals with Down syndrome, that cause much higher risk than the general population and individuals with other comorbidities. We are reaching out to you to assist us in identifying and enrolling these patients in our centralized system to receive the vaccine.

Another group at significantly increased risk is individuals with a cancer diagnosis. Specifically based on review of the literature, individuals who are receiving chemotherapy, radiation therapy or who are facing or had surgery for cancer now or in the past three months. Individuals who are diagnosed with active primary lung cancer, or hematologic cancers such as leukemia, lymphoma, or multiple myeloma, will also be included.

Attached is a letter from the Indiana Department of Health explaining to your patients that the IDOH will be reaching out via email and postal service to invite them to register to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. **We are asking that you be willing to share this with the patients that you are treating or have treated in the categories above.** We know that the timing of when they receive this vaccine may need to be directed through your office and that you may have concerns about treatments that they are currently receiving and their immune response. We also know that your patients trust you immensely and that if this letter comes from you it will help validate our outreach. That is why we feel it is critical to engage you as their primary providers. It is appropriate to encourage and assist your patients in signing up while they are visiting you in clinic after you have submitted their information to the portal.

To **promote**, **protect**, and **improve** the health and safety of all Hoosiers.



Please remind patients who are 16 and 17 that they must sign up for locations with the Pfizer vaccine. This information is available in the ZOTEC scheduling system.

We are also asking you to enter your patients into a portal with their name, DOB, diagnosis, email address, cell phone, home phone and address if you have this information. Every piece of information you are able to supply us with will increase the likelihood we can reach the patient. A cell phone number or an email will be required for the patient to receive the link to the scheduler. However, if they do not have a cell phone number or email we will plan to call them on their home phone to get them scheduled.

The portal is available here: <https://eportal.isdh.in.gov/C19PatientPopulation/Default.aspx>. We would respectfully request a response through the portal within one week if at all possible. This information will be used to send patients a vaccination invitation. We are trying to move through these higher risk groups of Hoosiers efficiently and effectively. If you have any difficulty submitting your information, please enter a help ticket at <https://eportal.isdh.in.gov/SchoolAppCustomer/> or call the general help desk at 888-432-9600 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week.

Please note that individual patient health information (PHI) may be shared with the Department of Health without the consent of the patient through the Treatment exception in HIPAA, found at 45 CFR 164.506. This is a referral for treatment, the treatment is the vaccination, from one provider to another. The state Department of Health is a provider for purposes of vaccine administration.

Thank you very much for your assistance in reaching this at-risk group for COVID-19 so that we can work effectively to protect them with COVID-19 vaccination. Please feel free to reach out to Dr. Weaver or me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Kristina Box, MD, FACOG
State Health Commissioner

Lindsay Weaver, MD, FACEP
Chief Medical Officer