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Guidance Summary for COVID-19 Vaccine Access in Congregate Settings Certified or Otherwise Authorized by the New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS):

“This guidance is based on the 1/11/21 guidance document issued by the NYS Department of Health for OPWDD, OMH, OCFS, OTDA, and OASAS titled, “Prioritization of Essential Healthcare and Direct Support Personnel as well as High Risk Populations for COVID-19 Vaccination.” (<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/01/guidance-for-week-5-oasas-ocfs-omh-otda-1.11.21.pdf>)

Scheduling COVID-19 vaccinations for priority populations, including staff and patient/residents in OASAS programs in congregate (i.e., bedded) settings, has begun. OASAS has notified provider agencies operating bedded programs to direct certain high-risk staff and residents or patients of OASAS bedded programs to begin scheduling vaccination appointments for these populations. This guidance is primarily for programs outside of New York City (NYC), and additional guidance for NYC based programs will be forthcoming from the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). However, the NYS DOH guidance includes important information for NYC-based programs, which do not need to await NYC DOHMH guidance before proceeding with scheduling vaccination for staff and patients/residents within their programs.

The groups prioritized for vaccination within OASAS programs during these weeks can include:

1. **Staff** who work in inpatient or residential programs with direct and regular resident/patient interaction. See the above risk prioritization guidance issued by the NYS DOH to stratify staff risk levels for further prioritization.
2. **Residents** of residential programs and **patients** of inpatient treatment programs with multiple patients/residents in a home or unit/facility (i.e., congregate settings). See the above risk prioritization guidance issued by the NYS DOH to stratify patient/resident risk levels for further prioritization.

Consent: Please note that if residents/patients are referred out of the facility for vaccination purposes, then the patient must be accompanied by the proper consent form, including 42 CFR Part 2, where appropriate. See the OASAS-modified consent form [here](#) and OASAS Counsel guidance [here](#).

The NYS DOH appointment scheduler is designed to make batch appointments, to the extent programs can transport safely multiple individuals to a vaccination site. This may be helpful for some inpatient and residential providers. Programs may also be able to coordinate with vaccinators to bring vaccine to their programs to administer rather than transporting patients out of the facility. Programs may opt to become vaccination sites, see the NYS DOH website (<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccine-information-providers>) for details. The NYC DOHMH will be communicating about an NYC-specific vaccination scheduling process. Please also note that NYC-based providers who wish to become vaccination sites must complete a separate, NYC-based enrollment process.

Vaccine Fact Sheets: As of 12/28/20, there are two vaccines with EUAs from the FDA, and the fact sheets are available at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/eua/index.html>.

Information on the screening process: The NYS DOH has a current COVID-19 vaccine screening tool available on its website. There is also a document on the website that explains the screening and the logic regarding its questions: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccine-information-providers>.

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