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Trump Administration Releases COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Strategy

Sept. 16, 2020

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Department of Defense (DoD) today released two documents outlining the Trump Administration's detailed strategy to deliver safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine doses to the American people as quickly and reliably as possible.

The documents, developed by HHS in coordination with DoD and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), provide a strategic distribution overview along with an interim playbook for state, tribal, territorial, and local public health programs and their partners on how to plan and operationalize a vaccination response to COVID-19 within their respective jurisdictions.

"As part of Operation Warp Speed, we have been laying the groundwork for months to distribute and administer a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it meets FDA's gold standard," said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. "This in-depth, round-the-clock planning work

with our state and local partners and trusted community organizations, especially through CDC, will ensure that Americans can receive a safe and effective vaccine in record time.”

The strategic overview lays out four tasks necessary for the COVID-19 vaccine program:

- Engage with state, tribal, territorial, and local partners, other stakeholders, and the public to communicate public health information around the vaccine and promote vaccine confidence and uptake.
- Distribute vaccines immediately upon granting of Emergency Use Authorization/ Biologics License Application and once CDC has made vaccine recommendations, using a transparently developed, phased allocation methodology.
- Ensure safe administration of the vaccine and availability of administration supplies.
- Monitor necessary data from the vaccination program through an information technology (IT) system capable of supporting and tracking distribution, administration, and other necessary data.

On August 14, CDC executed an existing contract option with McKesson Corporation to support vaccine distribution. The company also distributed the H1N1 vaccine during the H1N1 pandemic in 2009-2010. The current contract with McKesson, awarded as part of a competitive bidding process in 2016, includes an option for the distribution of vaccines in the event of a pandemic.

“CDC is drawing on its years of planning and cooperation with state and local public health partners to ensure a safe, effective, and life-saving COVID-19 vaccine is ready to be distributed following FDA approval,” said CDC Director Robert Redfield. “Through the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, CDC will play a vital role in deciding, based on input from experts and stakeholders, how initial, limited vaccine doses will be allocated and distributed while reliably producing more than 100 million doses by January 2021.”

Detailed planning is ongoing to ensure rapid distribution as soon as the FDA authorizes or approves a COVID-19 vaccine and CDC makes recommendations for who should receive initial doses. Once these decisions are made, McKesson will work under CDC’s guidance,

with logistical support from DoD, to ship COVID-19 vaccines to administration sites.

“The Department of Defense is uniquely positioned to help guide the OWS distribution strategy due to its vast logistical experience,” said General Gustave Perna. “Americans can trust that our country’s best public health and logistics experts are working together to get a vaccine to them as soon as available.”

Links:

- Operation Warp Speed Strategy for Distributing a COVID-19 Vaccine

- COVID-19 Vaccination Program Playbook

- COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Infographic

Visit the Operation Warp Speed page at

<https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Spotlight/Coronavirus/Operation-Warp-Speed/>

About Operation Warp Speed:

OWS is a partnership among components of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Defense, engaging with private firms and other federal agencies, and coordinating among existing HHS-wide efforts to accelerate the development, manufacturing, and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics.

About HHS & CDC:

HHS works to enhance and protect the health and well-being of all Americans, providing for effective health and human services and fostering advances in medicine, public health, and social services. To learn more about federal support for the nationwide COVID-19 response, visit [coronavirus.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/).

CDC works 24/7 protecting America's health, safety and security. Whether disease start at home or abroad, are curable or preventable, chronic or acute, or from human activity or deliberate attack, CDC responds to America's most pressing health threats. CDC is headquartered in Atlanta and has experts located throughout the United States and the world.

About DoD:

The Department of Defense's enduring mission is to provide combat-credible military forces needed to deter war and protect the security of our nation. The Department provides a lethal and effective Joint Force that, combined with our network of allies and partners, sustains American influence and advances shared security and prosperity.

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