April 13, 2022

The MMS will continue to monitor developments related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and the response by state and federal agencies. For current information, including updates from NEJM, visit the dedicated page on the MMS website: massmed.org/covid-19.

Public Health

Mass. DPH updates Comprehensive PPE guidance

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has updated its Comprehensive PPE guidance. Among other updates, health care personnel who are up to date with COVID-19 vaccines may remove their masks when they are in well-defined areas that are restricted from patient access (e.g., staff meeting rooms, kitchen). As a reminder, DPH has also extended the deadline that providers may request PPE from the State Stockpile to June 2022.

In addition, DPH is rescinding the COVID-19 Guidance for all Health Care Providers and Organizations.

Health care providers and organizations have developed and implemented best practices to mitigate the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and are encouraged to continue to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations as well as DPH provider-specific guidance.
Second booster for eligible LTCF residents and staff

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) urges administration of COVID-19 booster doses for patients and staff in long-term care facilities (LTCF). In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the DPH strongly encourages that LTCFs administer a second booster vaccine to their residents. Below are suggestions for ensuring an effective and safe booster clinic.

- Prior to administering second booster doses, ensure that it is administered at least four (4) months after the first booster dose. This information can be found in the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS). Please follow your facility’s policies and procedures for obtaining consents for residents.
- All individuals should be screened prior to administering the booster dose. The screening form can be found here: Prevaccination Checklist for COVID-19 Vaccines Information for Healthcare Professionals (cdc.gov) It is imperative that vaccine administrators have quick and easy access to the facility’s emergency kit (Benadryl and an Epi-pen). After the administration of the booster, residents must be observed for 15 to 30 minutes. In the event of an adverse reaction to the vaccine, a Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS) report must be submitted here: Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) (hhs.gov)
- After the clinic is completed, the second booster dose data needs to be uploaded in the MIIS system within 24 hours after administration. Upload the booster doses in bulk using the clinic roster that can be found in the patient tab under “clinic roster.” Complete the excel spreadsheet, including all required fields, and then upload it. All administered boosters should now be found within the residents’ MIIS chart.

Standing orders can be found below:

- Pfizer vaccine: Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine: 12 Years of Age and Older (Gray Cap) • Standing Orders for Administering Vaccine (cdc.gov)
- Moderna vaccine: Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine: Standing Orders for Administering Vaccine to Persons 18 Years of Age and Older (cdc.gov)
- Standing order for Medical Management: Medical Management of Vaccine Reactions in Adults in a Community Setting (immunize.org)
More information about second boosters and vaccination can be found in CDC’s Interim Clinical Consideration: Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines | CDC

For questions, please contact the Bureau of the Health Care Safety and Quality at DPH.BHCSQ@MassMail.State.MA.US

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