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CITY UPDATES NEW YORKERS ON VACCINE PREPAREDNESS

NEW YORK—Today Mayor de Blasio announced additional preparations for vaccine distribution. The City is expected to receive 465,000 doses of the vaccine by the beginning of January.

“With a vaccine on the horizon, we are in the last big battle against the virus,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Hope is finally on the way, but we must stay vigilant to get through these winter months. We need New Yorkers to keep doing what we know works: wear a mask, get tested, socially distance, and if you’re a senior citizen or have a pre-existing medical condition, stay home as much as possible.”

“The vaccine is one step to protect New Yorkers, especially our extraordinarily dedicated health care heroes,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Dave A. Chokshi**. “As the broader public awaits a vaccine, remember that we have other sources of protection, namely those precautions that brought COVID-19 under control the first time around—masking, distancing, hand-washing and staying home.”

In accordance with State and CDC guidelines, the initial expected doses will be given to nursing homes and health care personnel performing high-risk activities. The first shipments of the vaccine will be sent to hospitals, who have the capacity for ultracold storage, which is required for the Pfizer vaccine. Other healthcare personnel will receive vaccine next. To ensure equity in distribution, the City will also prioritize vaccination for residents and communities of color in the 27 neighborhoods that had been disproportionately hard hit in the spring,

The Health Department is prepared to stand up and operate temporary sites for additional capacity to supplement hospital vaccinations. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control is operating a program in partnership with pharmacies to bring vaccination to long-term care facilities throughout the country. Through this program, providers from CVS and Walgreens will bring vaccines and needed supplies to long-term care facilities to vaccinate both residents and staff.

Additionally, Health Department has been working closely with healthcare providers in New York City to prepare for forthcoming vaccine distribution. This has included sharing information on what we know about vaccine trials, timelines, and anticipated logistics for a campaign. The City is also continuing to enroll healthcare providers in the Citywide Immunization Registry, which allows the Health Department to track doses and vaccinations across healthcare providers within the City. The City is additionally prepared to launch sites citywide in coordination with emergency response partner agencies to offer vaccinations, ensuring access and availability citywide.

Yesterday, the FDA made public the data Pfizer provided in their Emergency Use Authorization application, which offers promising information about the safety and efficacy of the Pfizer vaccine. On Thursday, an independent FDA advisory committee is scheduled to discuss authorization. The FDA could issue the Emergency Use Authorization as soon as Saturday, and if so, on Sunday a CDC advisory committee will also meet and vote on clinical guidance to accompany the vaccine rollout. If all goes according to plan, the first doses of the Pfizer vaccine could arrive as early as next Tuesday, December 15th. A similar process will unfold for the Moderna vaccine, which could arrive a week or two after the Pfizer vaccine.

Ahead of next week, providers like BronxCare have now conducted trial runs of the COVID vaccine ordering process, from submitting the order all the way to facility confirming receipt of a test package.

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