

Hi everybody! I'm no longer updating this document frequently given all the resources that have popped up. I'll leave it up in case anyone needs it!

For great info moving forward, please check out [this Facebook group](#) (a little overwhelming, but if you can sift through, lots of great tips), [this google doc](#) (from that FB group), and <https://vaccinatepa.org/>

Love and health to your families <3

Warmly,

Katie

Background

This document is to help individuals find Covid vaccination appointments in Allegheny County. Right now, supply is extremely limited and finding an appointment requires equal parts luck and legwork.

This document has comments enabled, in case anyone has luck scheduling and can share tips. If you have information to add or see something that is incorrect or out of date, please create a comment so that we can keep this document as current and correct as possible.

Anything in blue below is a link you can click.

Vaccine providers currently include pharmacies (independent and big chains), hospital systems, federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), the health department, and a handful of other types of providers.

- Most pharmacies are scheduling or creating waitlists based on PA's expanded definition of Phase 1A, which now includes adults 65 and over and people 16-64 with one of the conditions listed at the bottom of this document.
- Hospitals have (mostly) not begun using the expanded definitions yet and likely will still only be vaccinating healthcare workers for the next couple weeks (as of 01/24).
- Community health centers and other providers are mixed so far as to whether they are using the expanded definition or not, but most are not scheduling currently or are only open to current patients.
- The health department is vaccinating healthcare workers and adults 65 and older at their site in the Doubletree Monroeville. People 16-64 with underlying conditions are not eligible right now.

For further research, the PA Department of Health's map of vaccine distribution sites is [here](#).

This document is by no means comprehensive. Using the map and other tools to do your own research is still a great idea. Wishing everyone health and hope you find something. Day by day, this is fairly frustrating now, and we seem to be at a pause, but it seems likely that supply will

pick up soon and/or a centralized system will be established to help. Hoping you don't get too disheartened and just keep trying for now, whenever you are able, and hang in there.

Jump to:

Key	2
Where to Start	2
Sites To Watch Soon	3
Sites Already Scheduling	4
Sites Establishing Waitlists	8
Sites Sending Updates, but not Adding to Waitlists	9
Sites Explicitly NOT Adding to Waitlists Now	9
Surrounding Counties	10
Conditions that qualify ages 16-64 for vaccination in PA in Phase 1A	10
Allegheny County Vaccine News	11

Key

Bolded text - Important note, please read

Green Highlight - New information, may want to act soon

Orange Text - Under review due to new information

Where to Start

Call your PCP, if you have one, to get on their waitlist, since there's no telling when they might get vaccine supply in. Could be soon and may be the best way.

Sign up for Allegheny Alerts, the County's announcement system, at [this link](#). Make sure to include texting as at least one of the ways to receive alerts. They come the fastest, which matters. Also, make sure to check off the group that specifically sends Covid-19 vaccine alerts. (Above your subscriptions, click edit and make sure to open the drop-down for the Covid group. There is a separate box to check in the drop down for vaccine alerts.) When new clinic dates are announced by the Health Department, the appointments are announced on Allegheny Alerts first and are gone within minutes. **NOTE: ACHD is NOT scheduling for people 16-64 with underlying conditions at this time. Only 65+ and healthcare providers. The system will**

still let this group through, but your appointment will be canceled or you will be turned away at the site.

Sign up for Allegheny Health Network's MyChart at [this link](#). It does not seem like you have to be an existing AHN patient. Although they have not expanded eligibility yet, they may begin doing big clinics at PNC Park soon and otherwise releasing more vaccines for the community and they will send the alerts for these or any scheduling through MyChart.

Get yourself added to waitlists by calling, emailing, filling out intake forms, etc. for the sites listed below and/or at other great new resources at <https://vaccinatepa.org/> and [this document](#). Many locations are keeping these for when their shipments come in. Since shipments are sporadic, probably a good idea to get on several waitlists and cancel once you get accepted somewhere.

Try to get scheduled at one of the few places actually scheduling. This requires some time in front of a computer where you or a helper can check the list below of sites scheduling throughout the day to see if anything has opened up.

This document is focused on Allegheny County (although the Rite Aid system often does assign appointments further out), with some information starting to be compiled about surrounding counties under that heading below. Another approach may be to check at independent pharmacies in surrounding counties, if you are willing to travel further. Remember that there are two doses and you'll likely have to return to the same site again.

Special Populations

If you are a veteran, reach out to the VA. They may be able to get you scheduled and they are holding frequent walk-in clinics, but you have to be enrolled. This can be done over the phone.

If you are an unpaid caregiver of an elderly individual or a person with a disability, you qualify for vaccination under 1a. [This letter](#) may be helpful to print out to bring along to your appointment. More info soon.

Sites Already Scheduling

Allegheny Health Network
Now scheduling for all of 1A!

<https://www.ahn.org/coronavirus/vaccine/schedule/eligible.html>

You can find more info and register for MyChart from [this link](#). Possible that this system is not working as well as hoped and one suggestion is to call their 412-DOCTORS (362-8677) number to ask about scheduling instead.

Giant Eagle

Click [here](#). The link will hopefully take you to an online queue for the scheduler, often a 1-15 minute wait. Unfortunately, not all links to GE work equally well. For some reason, certain links in Facebook or copy and pasted from somewhere work best, while clicking through their Covid site often seems to get stuck on a No Availability message.

Once in, you need to know a person's zip code and how far they can travel, date of birth, and name to schedule them, as well as an email address and phone number.

Giant Eagle now searches a 50 mile area around the zip code you enter, but searching extra zip codes still might make sense, depending how far you can go. **They also limit how many zip codes individuals can search to around 10. Afterwards, you get locked out for around 10 minutes or you can clear your browser's history and get right back in.** Another option is to jump around to different browsers, as well as the private mode for each (Incognito in Chrome, Private in Safari, e..g.) With this method, you likely have to get back in the queue.

If you happen to get in, work very quickly, appointments disappear quickly.

Giant Eagle appointments can so far be transferred to someone else, however, it is a bit cumbersome if you cannot get through to the working link! Make sure to use the one above or one that has worked for you. Then, you have to reenter the queue and if you see the zip code search, look below for the login. You can transfer the appointment there. If you cannot find someone to transfer the appointment to, the appointment can be canceled.

Walberg Family Pharmacy

Holding clinics regularly. Get on their update list at

<https://walbergfamilypharmacies.com/newsletter-sign-up> and make sure to confirm the email that you receive to be subscribed.

Hilltop Pharmacy

Currently booked, but check for cancellations and new appointments being added at [this link](#).

Heritage Valley Health System

Seem to be accepting registrations for all 1A eligible groups now, with a big group of February clinics just announced! Go to [this link](#) to register or call 724-770-7555.

Spartan Pharmacy

Spartan Pharmacy is scheduling big clinics often. It is worth checking their website at 8pm each day here to see if they are scheduling for the following day. The site goes down often, but if you get through, you may be able to get scheduled.

[This link](#) is for their update list. It closed for a while, worth trying in case they open back up. Watching their [Facebook](#) page also seems to be a helpful way to know what they are planning. If they say they are having a clinic on a given day, go to [their scheduler](#) the night before around 8pm to try to get an appointment. (This should be the right link, but if this doesn't work, try their [main site](#) and go from there.) It is swamped, so work quickly. When you click on the link, check all locations (there may even be an option for a Covid "location"). A list of vaccines will appear and if Covid is not listed as one of the options, that means they have already filled up. Very possible that the site will crash and/or that it will take a long time. Keep trying.

Allegheny County Health Department - **NOTE: ACHD is NOT scheduling for people 16-64 with underlying conditions at this time. Only 65+ and healthcare providers. The system will still let this group through, but your appointment will be canceled or you will be turned away.**

New Castle Shannon site announced! Individuals 65 years and older will be able to register for appointments at the Castle Shannon POD online beginning at 9 a.m. on Saturday, February 13. Links will be published at that time on the Health Department's COVID-19 Vaccine Information website (www.alleghenycounty.us/COVIDvaccine) and sent through Allegheny Alerts.

ACHD added spots at their Monroeville Doubletree clinic online at first, but for the most recent batch of slots switched to a phone reservation system through United Way's 211 service. They add appointments sporadically and it is hard to say how they will add appointments to come, but the most reliable way to find out is through Allegheny Alerts (described in Where to Start above).

All known links for clinic dates are listed below and [this is the link](#) on ACHD where most (not all) are also compiled. To find the appointment links, scroll down to the heading "COVID Vaccinations for Phase 1A and Future Phases" and look down for a list of dates with links to their right.

Though appointments fill immediately, they do add canceled appointments back into the system so it is worth checking these throughout the day. Checking the old links a lot and getting lucky, or moving super fast when they dates are announced seems to be the only way right now.

If nothing is available on the date you clicked, the link will take you straight to the PA Department of Health's website with a big, bold heading "**Getting the Covid Vaccine**" or to a screen that says the deadline has passed to register for the clinic. If you see this page, nothing is available now (though it may be later). When appointments are available, clicking that link next to the date will take you *straight* into the scheduling site, you will not see the PA DOH site at all.

If you get through, try to move through the questions on the form quickly; the appointments disappear quickly. On the insurance page, only the very first question is required. Skipping the rest will NOT hurt your ability to get vaccinated at ACHD's sites and will get you through much faster in the hopes of snagging an appointment before its gone.

No problem to fill out the form for someone else. **Please be sure the email listed received a confirmation email, since if they didn't, you may have missed the slot at the last second.** Often these confirmation emails come right away, but at times they have taken a few hours or overnight.

For what it's worth, if you are trying to find appointments for someone else, there are a lot of health questions in the ACHD registration form. It would probably be a good idea to get their answers ahead of time, although the option to answer "Don't Know" exists for many questions. Here are screenshots of what is asked:

T-Mobile 10:45 AM
cw2-pennsylvania-production.herokuapp.com

Do any of the following apply to you?

Is this your first or second COVID-19 vaccination? *

☐ First ☐ Second

Do you have any of the following chronic health conditions? *

- Cancer
- Chronic Kidney Disease
- COPD (Chronic Obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m² or higher but < 40 kg/m²)
- Severe Obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²)
- Pregnancy
- Sickle Cell disease
- Smoking
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Have you previously received a COVID-19 vaccine? *

T-Mobile 10:46 AM
cw2-pennsylvania-production.herokuapp.com

Have you previously received a COVID-19 vaccine? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Have you had a severe allergic reaction (e.g., anaphylaxis) after receiving COVID-19 vaccine? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Have you had a severe allergic reaction (e.g., anaphylaxis) to another vaccine (not including Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine) or any other injectable medication? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Do you have a bleeding disorder or are you taking a blood thinner? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Are you immunocompromised (have a weakened immune system such as cancer, leukemia, HIV/AIDS, or any other immune system problem) or are you taking medication that affects your immune system? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Do you have a fever? *

T-Mobile 10:46 AM
cw2-pennsylvania-production.herokuapp.com

Do you have a fever? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Are you feeling sick? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Are you pregnant? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Could you become pregnant in the next several weeks? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Are you breastfeeding (nursing)? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

IMPORTANT

If you receive Pfizer-BIONTECH's vaccine, you should receive a second vaccination three weeks (21 days) later.

If you receive Moderna's vaccine, you should receive a second vaccination four weeks (28 days) later.

[Back](#) [Save and Continue](#)

Rite Aid

Go to this link: <https://www.riteaid.com/pharmacy/covid-qualifier> The site asks several health questions for its intake, so might be best to have the person on the phone. However, also a “Don’t Know” option is also available for many questions and can be used if you only have basic info.

Tips for Scheduling

- Many times, after you get all the way through entering a person’s information, you will be told that the slot you selected in the first screen has been filled. This is a very frustrating glitch in the current system. The only thing you can do is click the button that says “Edit the appointment” and select another time, date, and/or location. Use this button and not the browser’s back button and it will save the info you entered.
- If you see several time slots all together, it often means there really are appointments. One time slot by itself so far often results in this glitch.

Rite Aid no longer allows the transfer of appointments! Details like location and time can be adjusted later, based on availability, which is often scarce. But it is no longer possible to switch an appointment from one name to another.

Very important: if you get an appointment at Rite Aid, please bring your NEW Medicare card (the one with the Medicare B card, not the old card with SSN as the identifier), along with other insurance cards, as per the instructions. Some reports of individuals turned away or much longer wait times when they did not bring their Medicare card or have their Medicare B number.

Sites To Watch Soon

Walmart/Sam's Club

Will begin distributing vaccines in PA at five local Sam's Club stores next week (probably starting February 11th), including Hempfield, Monroeville, Trinity Point, West Mifflin, and Pittsburgh Mills. You have to be a Sam's Club member currently to enter the scheduler. Check the following sites often. Appointments reportedly opened on 02/04 and were gone very quickly. Definitely worthwhile to continue checking often to see if more appointments are being added. <http://walmart.com/COVIDvaccine> and <http://samsclub.com/covid>

If anyone books here, please comment with any tips!

CVS

Walgreens

The interface to schedule is up [here](#) if you click "Find Appointment" and create an account, but it does not seem like there are any appointments listed in our area yet (or they are gone, will try to find this info soon). It's probably a good idea to go through account creation and the intake form now so that when they release appointments, you can search more quickly.

You can also sign up for Walgreens Vaccine alerts at the same [link](#).

Sites Establishing Waitlists

Livingston Pharmacy

Call 412-233-7100 or email LivPharm.Vaccine@gmail.com. Seem to have recently received a shipment, may be worthwhile.

Kevin's Pharmacy

An independently run pharmacy in a Shop N' Save. He said all scheduling will be done online.
[Check their website here.](#)

Primary Care Pharmacy Services Inc in Kennedy Township

Email COVID19@primarycarepharmacysvcs.com to ask to get on their waitlist.

Asti's South Hills Pharmacy

[Here is the website.](#) There is a form you can fill out to get added to their waitlist.

The Medicine Shoppe in Mt. Washington

Go to mtwashington.medicineshoppe.com and fill out the form at the top of the page to be added to their waitlist. (Successfully added)

Acorx Pharmacy

Email Amy Karlek at akarlek@acorxpharmacy.com to be added to their waitlist.

Primary Care Health Services (a community health provider)

Email dnieder@pchspitt.org to be added to their waitlist.

Pleasant Hills Apothecary

Fill out a form on their website [here](#) to get added to their list.

Waltmire Pharmacy in Spring Gardening

Email waltmirepharmacycovid19@yahoo.com to get added to their waitlist.

Blueberry Pharmacy

Join their waitlist [here](#). May be less publicized than others and have a shorter list.

Monongahela Valley Hospital

Accepting all patients eligible under Phase 1A for their waitlist through [their form](#).

Sites Sending Updates, but not Adding to Waitlists

Hilltop Pharmacy

Call (412) 431-5766 and follow the prompts to leave a message and get added to their email update list about the vaccine (not necessarily a waitlist, I don't think). (A friend's parents made and completed appointments here through an online system that has been taken down for now.)

UPMC

Still reportedly vaccinating healthcare workers, but worth watching their website and signing up for email updates at [this link](#).

Sites Explicitly NOT Adding to Waitlists Now

[East Liberty Family Health Care Center](#) (they say to check back soon as of 01/24)

Wilson's Pharmacy in Bloomfield

As of 01/26, say they likely will not be receiving another shipment until the end of February. 412-621-6471. Their website is [here](#).

Towne Drugs

No longer taking names. Asking that people call back in 4-6 weeks as of 01/28.

Surrounding Counties

Armstrong

ACMH Hospital has already been scheduling and conducting vaccinations, but they've stopped scheduling for the time being due to inconsistent supply. Definitely worth watching their website at <https://www.acmh.org/covid-19>

Butler

Butler Memorial Hospital received vaccine last week and has been making appointments for residents of Butler, Clarion, and Forest County 65 and older [at this link](#). If there's nothing when you visit, check again because cancelations seem to be added back in.

Clarion

See Butler Memorial Hospital in Butler County section above.

Fayette

Sign up for the Fayette vaccine registry [here](#) and providers in the county will use the list to schedule. Must be a Fayette county resident.

Forest

See Butler Memorial Hospital in Butler County section above.

Greene

Peters Township currently scheduling for a clinic for Greene and Washington County residents who are eligible under Phase 1A at [this link](#).

Washington

Peters Township currently scheduling for a clinic for Greene and Washington County residents who are eligible under Phase 1A at [this link](#).

Westmoreland

Westmoreland County has a new vaccination website [here](#). Good place to start, especially the [page with the listing of Westmoreland vaccine providers](#).

Conditions that qualify ages 16-64 for vaccination in PA in Phase 1A

Cancer, Chronic kidney disease, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), Down Syndrome, Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies, Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant, blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines., Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m² or higher but < 40 kg/m²), Severe Obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²), Pregnancy, Sickle cell disease, Smoking, Type 2 diabetes mellitus

It seems that getting vaccinated with these conditions is on the honor system right now. At least at Rite Aid and likely at most other providers, proof of the condition is NOT required. I *think* it's actually not legal for them to ask? Not certain about that. I have seen it written in a place or two that the pharmacy WILL ask you for proof of your qualifying condition, but I don't have any other information about that at the moment. Despite that it may not be legal to request, they may still be requesting and denying people based on lack of proof, so if for some reason proof is a burden for you, might be best to steer clear of those sites if you see that written.

Allegheny County Vaccine News

[Here's how much more Covid-19 vaccine doses Pennsylvania will get next week](#) -

Pittsburgh Business Times, Friday, Jan. 29

[COVID-19 In Allegheny County: Health Department Frustrated With Lack Of Vaccine Registration System At State Level](#) - KDKA 2, Wednesday, Jan. 27

On reddit, [here is a thread about vaccine scheduling](#) and a category [specifically about Covid in Pittsburgh](#). Here is a [another](#) and [another](#) with some helpful info.

[Allegheny Co. reports new vaccine appointments filled within 30 min., many by people not meeting criteria](#) - WPXI, Tuesday, Jan. 26

[Despite Expanding Eligibility, COVID-19 Vaccines Aren't Easy To Acquire](#) - WESA, Tuesday, Jan. 26

[Frustration grows with Pennsylvania's 'confusing' vaccine rollout](#) - Tribune-Review, Sunday, Jan. 24

[Wait time: Lining up COVID-19 vaccine a mixed bag for seniors as eligibility expands](#)
From the Post-Gazette, Sunday, Jan. 24

From the instant he got the email to the moment the needle pricked his arm, it took Stan Angrist less than 48 hours last week to secure COVID-19 vaccinations for himself and his wife, Sarah.

The email — a heads-up from an old friend — had pointed him to an online request form from Allegheny Health Network.

"I thought: 'This is way too good to be true,'" said Mr. Angrist 87, of Squirrel Hill, who got the jab at West Penn Hospital in Bloomfield the day after submitting the form. "I think it was partly dumb luck."

Across town in Banksville, luck had yet to find James Russell, 66, who tried for weeks — without success — to line up an inoculation for his 85-year-old mother. She lives in a private residence, not in a group-care setting where she might have easier access.

"Everything is so unorganized," Mr. Russell said after calling several pharmacies for help, only to be told they weren't taking down names that way. He feels that senior citizens living on their own "aren't getting a fair chance."

“It seems like they just left out a whole group of people,” said Mr. Russell, who doesn’t go online where many vaccine providers are directing appointment inquiries. “The left hand doesn’t know what the right hand is doing.”

Nearly six weeks after Pennsylvania received its first shipments of COVID-19 shots, families and health care providers said the vaccine rollout has often felt uneven, sluggish and frustrating to seniors — especially those who live independently and those who don’t use the internet for guidance.

For many, anxiety intensified Tuesday, when the state Department of Health expanded eligibility for the first phase of vaccinations to include all Pennsylvanians age 65 and older along with those ages 16 to 64 who have certain health conditions. The initial distribution had been centered more narrowly on the health care workforce and employees and residents of long-term care facilities.

Area vaccine provider information

The Pennsylvania Department of Health will make COVID-19 vaccines available through a phased approach. The state is currently rolling out Phase 1A, which targets residents and employees of long-term care facilities, health-care personnel, people ages 65 and older, and those ages 16-64 with medical conditions that cause increased risk for severe disease. The providers identified here had received the vaccines as of Jan. 22, according to the Health Department, although not all may have doses immediately available.

In line with new guidance at the federal level, the shift means more than 3.5 million higher-risk Pennsylvanians — or about a third of the state population — can now be inoculated under Phase 1A, said Dr. Debra Bogen, the Allegheny County health director. Inquiries surged almost immediately for vaccine providers, many of which indicated they were booked to capacity for the time being.

“We’re basically at the mercy of how much vaccine we receive on a weekly basis” through the federal government, said Cindy Findley, a deputy state health secretary, in a briefing last week. She projected it would take “several weeks to continue on” through Phase 1A, although a department spokeswoman said that would hinge on vaccine production.

By Friday, an official state map of COVID-19 vaccine providers showed more than 80 in Allegheny County, about 20 of which had received vaccine. Of those, many late last week temporarily paused making appointments for the general public or indicated they were focused on current patients or health workers as the state awaited more doses.

Those with temporary halts included Allegheny Health Network, which said Friday it had scheduled all its available vaccine but expected more soon.

Separately, an online booking system indicated this week's vaccination appointments at an Allegheny County Health Department clinic in Monroeville were fully booked after the department said those 65 and older would be welcome there.

Image Description

One pharmacy chain — Rite Aid — displayed some apparent openings after a roughly half-hour wait on a website. Rite Aid and the Topco pharmacy group are working with the state Department of Health, which oversees vaccine distribution, to offer shots at the retail level.

The state is asking those eligible to contact providers directly to make vaccination appointments as slots become available. The vaccine is administered free of charge.

"Any time our stores are made available for COVID-19, we're certainly seeing those appointments be taken very quickly," said Chris Savarese, a spokesman for Camp Hill-based Rite Aid.

Demand outstripping supply

The interactive provider map, like a vaccine eligibility quiz, appears through a state vaccine website: <https://www.pa.gov/guides/get-vaccinated/>. A lot of providers there push people to use email or web-based platforms to pursue appointments.

More than 12 million online visits to the map after it posted Tuesday show that "many Pennsylvanians are eager" for the vaccine, said Barry Ciccocioppo, the state health department's COVID-19 press secretary.

But for many elderly, the online emphasis to navigate the vaccination process can fall short, several health care experts said. Older Pennsylvanians often fare better with direct phone calls, material sent by mail or information shared otherwise by physicians, the experts said.

"I don't see a 75-year-old, unfortunately, going online and being able to coordinate those efforts through the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] or the state Department of Health. The task is just too daunting for them," said Marsha Simonds, administrator at the nonprofit Western Pennsylvania Home Health Association.

"There's a massive amount of information on those sites," she went on. "I had a hard time finding resources for myself."

Another nonprofit, LIFE Pittsburgh, cares for about 600 vaccine-eligible seniors in their homes but didn't know last week when they might be inoculated, said CEO Joann Gago. She said 30 to 40 of them have had COVID-19 already.

“I find it disturbing that I don’t know, at this stage of the game,” when they will be vaccinated, Ms. Gago said. The organization “provides everything for” clients, “yet we can’t get them vaccine.”

“If I have to go circuitously around the system, I will. But that should not be the way it is,” she added.

Health officials have encouraged friends and relatives to help older Pennsylvanians with the online logistics for vaccination. Those without internet access also can call the state health hotline at 1-877-PA-HEALTH for assistance contacting vaccine providers directly, department press secretary April Hutcheson said in a briefing.

In the meantime, she said, the state Emergency Management Agency is working on plans for mass vaccination clinics. Details have yet to be announced.

Mr. Ciccocioppo, in a statement to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, did not directly address concerns around vaccination-related communication but said the health department is “working with vaccine providers to help temper expectations.” The state’s weekly allotment of 140,000 vaccine doses from the federal government “is not increasing at this time,” he said.

Image Description

As of Wednesday, 88,450 people in Pennsylvania had received two doses of vaccine while 366,429 others had received one, according to state data. Two doses complete the vaccination process.

“We are asking Pennsylvanians to be patient,” Mr. Ciccocioppo said. “This is a global pandemic, and vaccine manufacturers are working to provide doses across the globe. There will be enough vaccine for everyone who wants it, but it will take months, not weeks, for manufacturers to catch up to demand.”

‘A good stress’

At the county level, Dr. Bogen said the Allegheny County Health Department is developing a system to schedule vaccinations for any inoculation sites it sets up. It will let people schedule over the phone, she said, so those without internet access can sign up.

“It is a high priority for me that vulnerable and at-risk populations get attention first,” she said in a weekly briefing.

As the county plans to collaborate with senior centers and other entities for that community-based distribution, Dr. Bogen said, the execution “depends on a reliable supply of vaccine to the county.” County Executive Rich Fitzgerald has said allocations change each week — and sometimes more — prolonging vaccination efforts.

The county had received about 115,000 doses as of mid-January, although a lagging tally on a state website showed fewer than 50,000 had been administered, Dr. Bogen said. Vaccine providers reported they nearly or entirely used up their allotments, and she was addressing the discrepancy with the state, she said.

In the meantime, health authorities urged Pennsylvanians to keep following pandemic protocols: social distancing, routine mask-wearing and rigorous hand-washing. Officials and clinicians alike voiced optimism that both the vaccine supply and the mechanisms to promote, schedule and deliver the shots would strengthen in the coming weeks.

“There’s a lot of hope, but it’s certainly been very stressful just waiting on the supply,” said Dr. Elizabeth Mohan, medical director of the UPMC St. Margaret Geriatric Care Center.

Still, the stress “can be a good stress — because everybody’s hopeful” for renewed closeness with family, she said.

Allegheny Health Network filled several thousand vaccine appointments early last week, with those slots stretching over the next couple of weeks, said Dr. Amy Crawford-Faucher, vice chair of AHN’s Department of Family Medicine.

When it comes to the general public, the network is prioritizing those at highest risk, such as the 75-and-up age group, she said.

“We acknowledge this feels like the last half-hour on a 12-hour car ride. It’s just so hard to wait that little bit longer,” Dr. Crawford-Faucher said. “Please be patient. We want to vaccinate you as much as you want to be vaccinated.”