



State of Utah

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Deputy Director

June 14, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Since the FDA authorized COVID-19 vaccines for use in individuals 12 and older, more than 1.5 million Utahns have received their first dose! As a pediatrician by training, this has been one of the most exciting developments in our pandemic response.

These vaccines are exceedingly effective. As of March 23, when all Utahns 16 and older became eligible to receive the vaccine:

- There have been 27,017 total COVID-19 cases identified in Utah. 96.9% (n=26,205) of them have been unvaccinated people..
- There have been 1,532 people hospitalized. 95.2% (n=1,459) of them were unvaccinated.
- And there have been 110 deaths. 98% (n=108) of them were unvaccinated.

As of today, 64% of Utahns 18 and older have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. We need to do more to make sure all Utahns take advantage of the opportunity to become vaccinated. As healthcare providers, you are among the most trusted voices people consider when making the decision about whether to vaccinate themselves and their children. Utahns are looking to you to help them make this important decision.

We are truly grateful for your dedicated and compassionate care during one of the most devastating pandemics in our world's history. Though we experienced our share of challenges, by almost every measure healthcare providers have led by example with positive outcomes and we are calling upon you again for your help.

Today, we are writing to ask you to help us "Bring It Home!" because we are so close, and the promise of achieving community immunity is within reach. Utah and the nation has set a goal of vaccinating at least 70% of adults 18 and older by July 4. Your leadership is crucial to helping us not only accomplish this important goal, but also to avoid a COVID-19 resurgence. We know July 4 is only a few weeks away, but this strategic goal is achievable -- especially if you will join us in a flash campaign to promote and support vaccinations in your practices. To that end, the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) is asking each of you to:

- Lead by example, encourage your staff, and talk about the COVID-19 in every patient encounter. COVID-19 vaccines are free and widely available at [hundreds of vaccine locations](#) across the state, including for walk-in and after hours appointments.
- Extend a personal invitation to your patient panels, inviting them to be vaccinated now, either in your clinic or at one of the many vaccine locations across the state.
- Become a vaccine provider now. It is easier than you think. We need COVID-19 vaccines in the hands of as many trusted providers as possible.

- If you aren't a COVID-19 vaccine provider yet, consider hosting a "pop-up" vaccination event at your clinic, especially before July 4, and perhaps even invite other practices in your organization to join you. These are free of charge and [easy to request](#). All pop-up clinics are welcome, large or small.
- Share the state's website for the [most reliable vaccine information](#), which provides important vaccine facts from trusted resources.

The UDOH has developed significant resources and educational materials to assist in this effort. Some of these materials are attached with this letter and can also be found [here](#), including:

- A form letter you can send to your patients.
- A detailed parent-education document that can accompany the form letter, or be used in your clinics to help guide conversations around vaccinating children.
- A provider-education document, targeting newer information on pediatric patients, that can help answer additional questions you might have, including detailed information about possible side effects.
- Information on how to become a COVID-19 vaccine provider. For more information on becoming a provider you can email covidvaxinquiry@utah.gov.

In addition, UDOH contact tracing staff are available to supplement your own staff and conduct outbound, proactive outreach to your patients. If you would like to utilize contact tracing staff to help with outreach to your patients please email Nicole Roberts at nbroberts@utah.gov.

Becoming a COVID-19 vaccine provider has become easier as we have progressed through our response. It is critical that patients not only receive trusted information from you, but that they have the option to receive the vaccine from you as well. To accomplish this, we must have more providers enrolled to administer the COVID-19 vaccine.

Additional educational materials can be found at coronavirus.utah.gov/vaccine. Flyers, videos, handouts, posters, fact sheets, graphics, and FAQs have been created in more than 30 languages. The information has been gathered from a number of credible resources and compiled into materials to help you share important and relevant information to your patients and families.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MHofmann".

Michelle Hofmann, MD, MPH, MHCDS
Deputy Director, Utah Department of Health