Best Practices for a COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic: Operating

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This resource was developed by the Texas Medical Association (TMA) to help physicians conducting COVID-19 vaccine clinics in their practice. It is most appropriate for physicians in small (1-2 practitioners) or large (4-5 practitioners) practices who are planning to offer the COVID-19 vaccine while still maintaining existing resources. It is not designed for those wishing to operate a mass vaccination clinic.

IN ADVANCE:

Scheduling Appointments
✓ Think about how traffic may affect appointment times.
✓ Communicate to patients about what they need for their appointment in advance.
  • Instruct patients to call or check-in online when they arrive instead of walking into clinic to answer your screening questions.
  • To minimize crowding in the waiting room, let patients know they will not be let inside the clinic until their appointment time.
    • Include any lead time you need to check-in and screen patients.
  • Let patients know to wear a mask and about any other policies they need to follow.
✓ Consider completing the scheduling for someone’s first and second doses (if applicable) at the same time.
  • Review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Interim Clinical Considerations for COVID-19 Vaccines for spacing times between doses.
✓ Schedule appointments closer to when the vaccine vial is opened since vials are only good for a certain period of time after the seal is punctured.
✓ Create a standby list for missed appointments or extra doses:
  • Identify existing patients who sign up for a waitlist who may be able to get to the clinic sooner if there are doses remaining at end of day.
  • Take names for those who show up without an appointment and add to a standby list.

Vaccine Preparation
✓ Make sure vaccination staff know the time limitations for how long each vaccine can be refrigerated or sit at room temperature.
  • Pfizer/BioNTech Storage and Handling Information (Printable PDF)
  • Moderna Storage and Handling Information (Printable PDF)
  • Johnson&Johnson/Janssen Storage and Handling Information (Printable PDF)
**Staff Preparation**

- Maximize the use of staff by aligning responsibilities for the vaccine clinic with existing roles. For example:
  - Front office can handle paperwork.
  - Office manager can handle patient preparation and scheduling.
  - Physicians or appropriate medical assistants can handle vaccination.

- Consider how staff time may be affected by existing daily responsibilities.
  - Administration of the COVID-19 vaccine is time sensitive so balancing existing tasks may require advanced scheduling of staff time or additional temporary support.

- Print out and prepare any materials needed for vaccination. This includes:
  - CDC COVID-19 vaccination cards filled out with type, lot, date, and place
  - Any COVID-19 vaccine acknowledgment or consent forms:
    - Consent for ImmTrac2 is not required to receive the vaccine but if using this opportunity to get patient consent for ImmTrac2, be sure to use the appropriate form and be prepared to let the patient know why and how their vaccine administration will be recorded (**DSHS Texas Immunization Registry: Disaster Event Consent Overview**).
  - Food and Drug Administration (FDA) COVID-19 Vaccine Patient and Caregiver Fact Sheets: ([MODERNA, PFIZER/BIONTECH, JOHNSON&JOHNSON/JANSSEN])
  - To identify patients with allergies: CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Triage Table
  - **Information on CDC V-Safe**
  - Make sure staff are aware of when and how to report in the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS)

**DAY OF CLINIC:**

**Patient Preparation:**

- Make sure patients follow your check-in and screening procedures before they come inside.
  - Consider displaying QR code on a laminated sign in the office or posted outside so patients can sign up for V-safe during their wait before or after vaccination.
  - Post a telephone number or website they should use to notify staff of their arrival.
  - Do not allow someone inside until their appointment time.

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  - Do not have patients form a waiting line outside the clinic.
  - Ask patients to wait in their vehicle if they arrive prior to their appointment time.

**Vaccine Preparation:**

- Prep only enough vials you need that day.
- Have staff draw up a syringe for each dose 15 to 30 minutes before the first appointment; this will let you know if you have any extra doses to schedule.
- If patients are scheduled beyond a six-hour interval, consider not opening the next vial until needed.
- Keep track of the expiration time for each vial.
Staff Preparation:

✓ Have all materials for patients collated and prepped by appointment:
  • FDA COVID-19 Vaccine Patient and Caregiver Fact Sheets (MODERNA, PFIZER/BIONTECH, JOHNSON&JOHNSON/JANSSEN)
  • CDC COVID-19 Vaccine Card (comes with vaccine shipment)
  • Information on CDC V-Safe

✓ Have all vital stations prepared at the beginning of the day.
  • Include an epinephrine pen and any other medication you may need in case of an allergic reaction.

✓ For existing patients, have patient history filled out.
  • Know if any patients with an appointment have a history of allergies and plan for extra observation time.

✓ Plan for dedicated staff time for data entry.
  • Enter and ensure information has been uploaded within 24 hours.

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