Best Practices for a COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic: Planning

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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.

PLANNING FOR A COVID-19 VACCINATION CLINIC:

✓ Make sure you are registered to be a COVID-19 vaccinator (refer to TMA COVID-19 Vaccine Administrator’s Checklist for more on how to register).

✓ Review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 Vaccination Program Provider Requirements and the Texas Department of State Health Services Information for COVID-19 Providers.

✓ Consider the cost of dedicating clinic time to administer COVID-19 vaccines:
  • Estimate staff and administration time required, including data entry and reporting.
  • Know what does and does not qualify for vaccine and visit reimbursement (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Toolkit, AAP COVID-19 Vaccine Coding).
  • Expect to spend time answering patient questions or concerns about the vaccine, which may or may not be billable time.

✓ Decide on how to communicate vaccine availability to patients and the public:
  • Identify patient populations who have highest need for vaccine.
  • Unless allowing for walk-in appointments, do not have public advertisements about offering the COVID-19 vaccine.
  • Expect high call volume and have a script or messaging available for staff. For example, the American Medical Association (AMA) COVID-19 VACCINE SCRIPT FOR PATIENT INQUIRIES.

✓ Evaluate physical space needed to run a clinic:
  • If offering a drive-thru clinic, you will need sufficient space for parking and plans for addressing those who may have a reaction which prevents them from driving after their shot.
  • If requiring online check-in or offering drive-thru, make sure your WiFi capabilities extend to your parking and outdoor spaces.
  • Plan for an observation area where individuals can sit physically distanced for a minimum of 15 minutes after their shot.
  • Account for weather if conducting any part of the clinic outside.

✓ Due to the interruption it can cause in planning the number of doses you have available; it may not be most efficient to offer impromptu vaccine administration during a routine clinic visit. However, if patients initiate interest in getting vaccination during an appointment and it works with your available supply and staff capacity, vaccination should be given at that time.
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