

COVID-19 Regional Vaccine Consensus Statement

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The hospitals within the Capital Region are committed to the safety of our patients, staff and our community. As such, we believe that all healthcare workers (employees, students, credentialed staff and volunteers), barring exemption or appropriate deferral, should be required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Therefore, we agree to implement mandatory vaccination policies and are taking steps to achieve that goal in our respective institutions.

Why?

COVID-19 is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and death. Anyone can get COVID-19, including people who are otherwise healthy. Requiring a COVID-19 vaccine demonstrates our commitment to protect the safety and health of our patients, many of whom already have weakened immune systems, as well as visitors, co-workers, and our own families. Highly transmissible variants of COVID-19 are increasing in the community and causing increased case rates which may affect our patients, visitors, and staff.

What we Know about COVID-19 Vaccine:

All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States have been shown to be highly effective at preventing COVID-19. In addition, the available vaccines have proven to be safe as evidenced by the tens of millions of doses administered with only very rare serious side effects.

Based on what we know about vaccines for other diseases and from clinical trials and ongoing studies of the COVID-19 vaccines, experts believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may also help keep you from spreading the disease and from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19.

Evidence strongly suggests that getting vaccinated protects other people, particularly those at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Vaccine Availability:

There is now sufficient supply and access to Covid-19 vaccine in the Capital Region to provide vaccination to all healthcare workers.

Exemptions to and Deferrals of vaccination:

Employees may be exempt or defer receiving the COVID-19 vaccination under institution specific definitions.

Such exemptions and deferrals may include those individuals with circumstances such as existing or potential allergic reactions to the vaccine, an immune compromised state, pregnancy and lactation, or those with a laboratory confirmed history of COVID. As more information becomes available the need for exemptions and deferrals may change.

Timing:

The mandatory vaccination requirement should take effect as soon as practically possible.

Compliance:

Compliance with mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for all healthcare workers will be guided by individual institutional policy.

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