



## COVID-19 Vaccine Update

*Dec. 15, 2020*

### Overview

The first COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer were delivered to targeted destinations yesterday. As a healthcare company, our frontline caregivers are listed as priority to receive vaccines. We know you have a lot of questions and with the announcements of FDA approval, CDC Guidance and individual state's plans, we want to share information and provide details for our caregivers and support teams.

Important information about the vaccine itself, who has access and how the vaccination will be deployed is coming out rapidly. GMR has established [a dedicated web page](#) providing up-to-date information on the vaccine efforts and links to information sources supported by medicine. As we did at the beginning of the pandemic, we have identified the [CDC](#) as our primary reference point for COVID-19 vaccination information.

As an overview, the COVID-19 vaccination initiative is an integrated combination of efforts of the Federal government, State governments, the vaccine manufacturers and healthcare providers. As the Pfizer vaccine is the first in what will be several different vaccines, we felt it was important to highlight the specific roles of each entity.

Here are the responsibilities of government entities:

- The Federal government, through the FDA, is responsible for approving a vaccine for use and coordinating distribution of vaccines to states.
- CDC advises but does not mandate the vaccine prioritization. In their initial prioritized list, healthcare workers (including EMS) and long-term care facilities were recommended as the first wave of recipients.
- Individual states are responsible for determining all the specifics of vaccine deployment, prioritization and a statewide plan of administration. The state must follow manufacturers guidelines for storage and administration of the vaccine and can determine exactly which specific categories of individuals will be vaccinated in what order.

- Important to us, states and in some cases local counties/municipalities, will determine what constitutes “healthcare providers and EMS” and will therefore be responsible for local prioritization.

## **What this means for GMR team members**

Because each state has a unique and different vaccination plan, GMR teams have been involved at federal, state and regulatory levels for vaccine strategy and planning. At this point, GMR will not receive control of vaccines for employee vaccinations at a national level, so your local Operation leadership will have the most current information about your state/local requirements and availability of the vaccine.

While we’re not aware of any requirements to date, states and/or local communities might require healthcare organizations or healthcare providers to mandate employees receive the vaccination once the COVID-19 vaccine is readily available. If that’s the case, your local leaders will share that with you, and we will post that information on the [GMR COVID-19 Vaccine web page](#).

As we enter this next chapter in the management of the COVID-19 pandemic with a vaccination strategy, we thought it would be helpful to provide answers to commonly asked, pertinent questions you or your family may have.

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## **FAQs**

### **Do I have to get a vaccine?**

GMR is not currently mandating that any employee receive a vaccine. Similarly, GMR will not mandate any specific manufacturer’s vaccine over another. That said, we do strongly encourage our frontline caregivers to seriously consider getting the vaccine to protect yourselves. The FDA internal and external approval process provided sound review of the data and scientific evidence of the vaccine trials. To date, neither the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) nor the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) have given any specific guidance yet.

The GMR COVID-19 Vaccine web page provides access to information and literature for your review.

### **Who will give the GMR frontline teams the vaccine?**

Vaccine programs are being administered by each state. Who will deliver vaccines and how they will be administered is determined by the state. In states that will be using EMS personnel as

vaccinators, we are working to be identified as approved healthcare providers who can deliver the vaccine. At present, GMR will not receive control of vaccines for its own employees but may be a state vaccinator and in some cases then vaccinate GMR frontline caregivers or employees.

We will constantly monitor individual state programs and have posted a state-by-state list of pertinent information on the GMR COVID-19 Vaccine web page.

**Is there a possibility that GMR will participate in vaccine administration before our frontline caregivers receive the vaccine?**

Yes. Because individual states determine the vaccination prioritization, there is a possibility that a GMR individual that administers a vaccine will not be vaccinated themselves prior to vaccinating others. GMR continues to work diligently with each state to ensure we remain on the priority list.

**How many vaccines are there and are they all the same?**

As of today, there is one vaccine, manufactured by Pfizer, which has FDA Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). The vaccine is given in two doses separated by 21 days. The vaccine is mRNA based. It essentially stimulates cells to make proteins important to creating an immune response to the COVID-19 virus. It was deemed to be 95% effective in reducing symptomatic COVID-19 infection in approximately 40,000 individuals enrolled in the trial.

Moderna, the next vaccine candidate, submitted their data to the FDA on November 30 for review and they are expected to be the next approved vaccine. The Moderna vaccine is also 2 doses (separated by 28 days) and claims a similar 95% effective response.

There are several additional vaccines currently in clinical trials. As they submit to FDA for approval, we will update you on the specifics.

**Are any tests required to get the vaccine?**

No.

**If I have already had COVID-19, should I get the vaccine?**

CDC recommends yes within 90 days, as long as you have recovered from the illness.

**Should I get this vaccine if I got the flu shot?**

It is recommended that you wait at least 14 days after receiving a flu shot before getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

**Do I need to still “Mask UP!” after I receive the vaccine?**

Yes. Even after the vaccine administration it is still possible to be a carrier of COVID-19 and

spread it to others. Additionally, efficacy of the vaccine (currently) is between 85-95% and as a healthcare provider we will still require employees to use necessary PPE per CDC guidelines for patient care. For the foreseeable future, GMR will continue to require employees to also wear a cloth or other protective masks while at work when not treating patients.

**Are there specific requirements for pilots?**

Yes. The [FAA](#) allows vaccination of pilots with the Pfizer vaccine but requires a 48 hour no fly period post vaccination (both doses).

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We know that there will be many questions as the vaccination programs continue to evolve. We're committed to providing timely updates and links to additional information as it becomes available.

The GMR COVID-19 Vaccine web page will be our designated, single source of information for this part of the pandemic.

We appreciate what you have collectively done and how you've done it. We will get through this and the introduction of effective vaccines is a major milestone in defeating the virus.

We're proud of you and we stand with you.

Thanks,



Ted Van Horne, COO



Ed Racht, MD, CMO