

## Executive Summary

Louisiana has an established organizational structure and planning process to operationalize the COVID-19 vaccine response. Clear roles and responsibilities were established along with a commitment of collaboration by public and private sector partners. Existing infrastructure, processes and procedures will be used to monitor performance targets, resources, activities, procurement and expenses. Evaluation and improvement will be ongoing throughout the response to identify best practices and share lessons learned.

In February 2020, the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) Office of Public Health (OPH) updated its Pandemic Influenza and Severe Viral Respiratory Pathogen Plan. A COVID-19 vaccine planning team with representatives from multiple state agencies formed in April 2020. The OPH established a formal Vaccine Action Collaborative (VAC) that includes a wide representation of professionals from both public and private sectors, to coordinate and update planning and response efforts for the allocation, distribution and dispensing of COVID-19 vaccines in July 2020. The VAC established work groups for the response effort: Prioritization and Allocation; Planning, Logistics and Operations; and Communications and Outreach. The collective work of the VAC and its work groups are represented in planning and allocation tools. This Playbook builds upon a number of existing plans related to public health emergencies. Past experiences involving the distribution and administration of vaccines were used to influence this planning document. The security of systems, locations and transport has been assessed and will continue to develop. Health equity is incorporated in every step of planning.

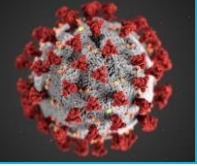
Pharmacy engagement and Closed Point of Dispensing (POD) planning will be the framework for the initial phase of the COVID-19 vaccine response. LDH OPH will follow the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and CDC recommendations for the use of a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine and guidance for priority groups. The OPH and the VAC will communicate directly with facilities to ensure proper COVID-19 vaccine education, management, prioritization, documentation, and follow-up. As higher volumes of doses become available in Phase 2, administration of vaccine to priority groups will continue to occur through registered vaccine providers in the state immunization registry LINKS, such as hospitals, pharmacies and healthcare providers. Vaccine will be distributed to the public through multiple mechanisms, including a combination of public and private providers. In Phase 3, when a sufficient supply of vaccine is expected, we will expand distribution and vaccinators. Flexibility within this framework is necessary for an effective response which will depend on vaccine indications and priority groups at the time.

Prioritizing critical populations involves difficult ethical decisions. Guidelines involving critical populations evolve as information changes. Ethical principles used in the deliberation within the VAC include: Utilitarian Principle; Public Order Principle; Narrow Social Utility; Reciprocity; and Subsidiarity.

In Louisiana, most COVID-19 vaccine providers are already registered vaccine providers due to rulemaking in April 2020 that required all vaccinations be reported to LINKS. We will rely first on this base of providers to educate, register, and credential to be COVID-19 vaccinators. Potential new vaccine providers will be recruited to enroll through direct communications by OPH and disseminated through established communication networks. Interested COVID-19 vaccination providers will be required to complete the CDC Provider Agreement along with the appropriate LINKS enrollment documents. Verification of providers for required credentials will occur through a review process conducted by OPH.

# LOUISIANA COVID-19 VACCINATION PLAYBOOK

## October 16, 2020



Louisiana conducts an annual series of influenza mass vaccination exercises, including drive-through vaccination. This year's exercise will be conducted following infection control, social distancing practices along with planning to ensure adherence to vaccine storage and handling requirements at every level. Louisiana participated in a CDC pilot project utilizing the Pandemic Flu Response Planning tool to estimate vaccine administration capacity. The *Modeling Pandemic Influenza Vaccination Capacity, Louisiana Report* was completed in March 2019 and shared with key partners.

Louisiana and vaccination providers are responsible for maintaining vaccine quality through the immediate receipt of shipments upon arrival at their respective sites. Each provider will have designated, trained staff to receive, inspect, transfer, and store COVID-19 vaccine. COVID-19 vaccines will be transported, not shipped, to a satellite, temporary, or off-site COVID-19 vaccination site. An evaluation process will be developed to ensure vaccine quality is maintained. Vaccine transportation procedures will be outlined in an upcoming addendum to the *COVID-19 Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit*.

The Louisiana COVID-19 Allocation Tool apportions vaccine by percentages based on the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) guidance for priority groups. This tool includes planning by Phases. Louisiana has identified groups using the terminology of LDH Health Standards. COVID-19 vaccination providers will order COVID-19 vaccine through the LINKS integration with the CDC's Vaccine Tracking System (VTrckS) for provider direct order entry. Staff will manage COVID-19 vaccine, ancillary supplies, resource procurement and distribution. Plans ensure adherence to storage and handling requirements at every level. These plans will be further operationalized as more specific information becomes available. COVID-19 required vaccine administration information will be collected via LINKS and sent to the CDC.

LINKS is a robust, mature immunization information system that meets all requirements for the COVID-19 campaign. The LINKS team has successfully tested with the Immunization Gateway and updated the mass vaccination module. A privacy preserving linkage agreement is in final discussion. Detailed alternate planning is in place. There are several options for reminder recall with LINKS generating a reminder list/postcards/mailling labels/auto dialer files. Video trainings and reference guides are available. At the state level, vaccine recipients may also be reminded through the consumer access portal, MyIR Mobile.

The LDH Bureau of Media and Communications and GOHSEP have a well-established communication strategy to support the vaccination response. OPH has partnered with a private entity for a COVID-19 vaccination multi-media campaign. Direct communications with providers occur through the use of the OPH mass email and fax capability, and a Regional and State Health Alert Network (HAN). Communications with the general public are enhanced by the use of the "211" Statewide system and will be used during the vaccination campaign. Higher-level communications will be achieved through trusted LDH OPH State and Regional designated spokespersons.

OPH staff will identify and develop training tools, including information on the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System, Emergency Use Authorization forms and Vaccine Information Statements. Staff will develop and implement a training plan. Regional staff will engage in a provider educational campaign. The LDH Immunization webpage includes information on how to report adverse events along with the importance of reporting for prompt investigation of signals. Trained staff effectively use state, CDC and national systems, tools and dashboards to monitor performance, inform decision-making and keep our citizens up-to-date. The Louisiana pandemic experience has been unique, complicated by hurricanes. Successful outcomes will require the engagement of all persons in Louisiana.