

NEWS BRIEF

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CDC Approves Recommendation for COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Dr. Robert Redfield has approved a COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan. The approved interim recommendation first offers vaccine distribution to health care workers and residents of long-term care facilities in the initial phase of the vaccination program before offering the vaccine to the general public.

This recommendation comes from an independent panel of scientific advisors of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Redfield approved their recommendation after the panel's 13-1 vote in favor of the distribution plan. The ACIP stated that this interim recommendation could be updated over the coming weeks based on additional safety and efficacy data.

COVID-19 Vaccine Timeline

Drugmaker Pfizer Inc., in partnership with German drugmaker BioNTech, continue to submit data to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for their COVID-19 vaccine candidate. As Pfizer and BioNTech continue to submit data, the FDA has not yet approved a vaccine for use in the United States. However, according to the FDA, federal advisory groups will discuss authorization for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine on Dec. 10, 2020. Additionally, drugmaker Moderna Inc. has also applied for EUA for its COVID-19 vaccine and continues through the approval process.

Pending approval from the FDA, federal officials are prepared to send 6.4 million doses within 24 hours of the authorization, meaning that the COVID-19 vaccine could potentially be available to the outlined groups before the end of 2020. Drugmakers Pfizer Inc. and Moderna Inc. are prepared to distribute up to 22.5 million vaccine treatments before the end of the year.

The approved interim recommendation offers the initial distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine to around 21 million U.S. health care workers and 3 million long-term care residents.

What This Means

Under the CDC's recommendation, it wouldn't be until the beginning of 2021 at the earliest for the general public to have access to the vaccine. While the CDC has issued this recommendation, governors and state health officials will be tasked with making local decisions. The projected timeline means that organizations should plan for the coronavirus pandemic to continue, and await more guidance for what COVID-19 vaccine distribution timelines will mean for workplaces.

