



# North Ottawa Community Health System

## **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT COVID-19 VACCINATION**

In an attempt to speed up the process of vaccination, the State of Michigan approved front-line essential workers such as police officers, first responders, state and federal employees, jail and prison staff, teachers and child care providers, as well as those aged 65 will now be eligible to receive vaccination starting January 11.

This is excellent news, but it's not without significant challenges. Unfortunately, many vaccination sites across the state (including Ottawa County Public Health Department and North Ottawa Community Health System) have not been given enough of the vaccine to even schedule appointments.

This newly eligible group of residents total in the tens of thousands in Ottawa County. While it is a wonderful sign that so many in the community are anxious to do their part, it is frustrating that distribution of vaccine is not keeping pace with demand, and puts vaccination sites that are otherwise ready to go, in a very difficult position.

The state's method of distribution right now is to look week-to-week at how many vaccinations were given in the seven days and what, if any, surplus of the vaccine remains before orders can be replenished. However, vaccination sites need to be sure they have enough inventory on hand well ahead of time to address not only the pent up demand heading our way, but also simultaneously finish vaccinating those awaiting boosters – like doctors, nurses, and EMS providers.

At this time, NOCHS has submitted requests for more vaccine, but have not received our supply. We have a dedicated team advocating on multiple levels (state and national) to clear every obstacle in order to take care of our community as we have done since the COVID-19 pandemic began and for 100 years before that.

We are proud to have been among only a small number of hospitals to complete vaccination clinics for our staff in a matter of days. And prouder still to have made our surplus immediately available to independent physician groups, dentists and staff at our local Free Health Clinic in an effort to inoculate as many medical professionals in our community as quickly as possible so they can continue caring for you safely and without further interruption.

In the meantime, we ask for the public's patience. When we have confirmation that it's on the way, we will announce to local media and on social media that we have opened scheduling at [noch.org](http://noch.org) for those who are eligible to make appointments.

Of note, to those members of the community who were part of our 1A group that received their first dose in December, we will still be holding booster shot clinics on 1/11, 1/13 and 1/20 from 9:00AM to

4:00PM on a walk-in basis. We have withheld enough vaccine to complete the vaccination process for those individuals. Make sure you bring your vaccination card.

We are grateful for your continued support.

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