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Louisiana Independent Pharmacies Association

What's New and What to Watch

LIPA Newsletter:
Bringing you the latest news and information concerning independent pharmacies and the profession at-large....



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Members.

While a very small number (107) of Louisiana pharmacies were randomly selected to receive 100 doses of COVID vaccine this week, **100% of pharmacies** were majorly impacted by the state publicizing the availability of vaccine in pharmacies. During what has historically been your busiest week of the year with insurance changes, your pharmacies were faced with hundreds of calls daily, maintaining waiting lists, and patiently explaining that you are waiting to receive the vaccine. LIPA's COVID Vaccine Team has been working long hours seven days a week to advocate for independent pharmacies and work with LDH and payers to get information to you.

We have daily check-in calls with Immunization Program leadership to get answers to questions and notify them of issues. Vaccine is currently very scarce and plans for allocation are very fluid and can change quickly. Pharmacies that received vaccine this week are scheduled to receive vaccine again next week and a limited number of additional pharmacies are being added.

Help LIPA's COVID Member Support Team Help You—[New COVID Vaccine Survey](#) LIPA has worked to demonstrate to LDH's Immunization Team the willingness and capacity of our member pharmacies to administer the vaccine and the quantity they can reasonably "get in arms". The most efficient way for us to quickly get the information we need **to advocate for you** is through an online survey. Results from the previous survey (to which we received 70 response) have been used multiple times just this week when information was needed by LDH quickly. The LDH Secretary is keenly interested in your feedback and we will be sharing it with her as well.

Medicare Reimbursement for COVID Vaccine Administration CMS has established [new codes and fees](#) based on the geographically-adjusted payment allowances for the COVID-19 vaccine. These amounts differ from the \$16.94 and \$28.39 rates for 2020.

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| New Orleans (01) | \$16.30 | \$27.32 |
| Remainder of Louisiana (99) | \$15.62 | \$26.18 |

Hat tip to one of our members for bringing this to our attention!

Optional COVID Vaccine Information Form While written consent or vaccines is not required in Louisiana (consent is implied) COVID vaccine providers need to report a lot of information in LINKS. LIPA has tweaked a form originally created by Morris & Dickson for use in clinics to make it applicable for use by pharmacies. You can access the form [here](#).



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Nurses Administering Vaccine at Pharmacies LIPA has received multiple inquires asking whether RNs and LPNs can administer COVID vaccines as part of the pharmacy’s immunization team. We reached out to the Louisiana Board of Nursing and received the following response:

As far as the overarching scope of practice of licensees, RNs with the requisite knowledge, skill, and ability may provide vaccinations within the acceptable standards of care as well as within the applicable policies and procedures. RNs provide services pursuant to an authorized prescriber’s order. Thus, one point of clarification I would recommend is clarifying who the prescriber is.

LIPA is engaged in discussions with the Board of Pharmacy and LDH regarding who the prescriber will be in such cases and will keep you updated.

Kentucky Medicaid Selects Med Impact as Their Single PBM Kentucky Medicaid has awarded a contract to MedImpact Healthcare Systms to provide PBM services for all five of their Medicaid managed care plans (Aetna, Human, Molina, United Healthcare, and WellCare/Centene) beginning July 1, 2021. The contract will run through December 31, 2024, with three additional one-year renewal options. Magellan Rx Management currently holds the fee-for-service (FFS) PBM contract, with options through December 31, 2021; it will continue to process FFS pharmacy claims unrelated to this procurement.

Asa Hutchinson: Indie Pharmacies Do Better Job Delivering Vax to Nursing Homes In an interview on CBS News’ “Face The Nation,” Hutchinson said 60% of his state’s nursing homes opted out of delivery by the federally contracted Walgreens and CVS chains, and chose instead independent pharmacies. “They’re doing a better job of getting it out than the chain pharmacies,” he said of independent drug stores. “They’re acting with more urgency. That’s an example I’ve learned. When you look at the challenges with a specific population, what it is going to be like when we move to essential workers and whenever we move to the general population, we’re going to have to utilize more resources to get this out than we’ve got planned right now.” The full transcript of the interview can be found [here](#).

How West Virginia vaccinated all its nursing homes before the end of December By the end of December, West Virginia had given all roughly 28,000 staff and residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities in the state the first dose of the coronavirus vaccine. It was a remarkable achievement, especially given that only about 429,000 doses have been administered to long-term care facilities nationwide, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The key was Gov. Jim Justice’s decision not to use the federal Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program. Rather, he let state and local agencies work with private healthcare providers to administer the vaccine. “As we looked at the federal program and the makeup of our pharmacies in West Virginia, it became that the federal program might not be the best avenue for our state to tackle long-term care facilities,” said Krista Capehart, director of professional regulatory affairs for the West Virginia Board of Pharmacy, one of the agencies responsible for coordinating the effort. Under the federal program, vaccines are distributed via two large chain pharmacies, CVS and Walgreens. According to Matt Walker, director of the West Virginia Independent Pharmacy Association, it made more sense for West Virginia to rely more on independent pharmacies. “West Virginia is a small, rural state, and we don’t have a city with more than 50,000 people,” Walker said. “But what we do have is many small communities with small pharmacies that are trusted in those communities.” Read more [here](#).

Hope and frustration mix as Acadiana lines up for vaccinations Father-son pharmacists Ivan and Jonathan Landry learned New Year’s Eve that they’d been selected to get the first doses of Moderna’s COVID-19 vaccine the following Monday morning. Only 100 doses would arrive, far too few for the more than 1,000 customers who had called into their homey shop, Towne Pharmacy in Broussard, as of Tuesday morning hoping to get their first shots in the arm. “We gave 60 yesterday and will be giving 40 today,” Ivan said that morning. Customers flooded in, some hopeful to see the end of the pandemic in sight, others frustrated and confused by another set of delays. Read more [here](#).

