

Date: January 4, 2021

To: IL residents and families

From: Melissa Fortner, Executive Director

Subject: COVID-19 Vaccination Update for Independent Living residents



**THE VILLAGE AT  
ORCHARD RIDGE**

A National Lutheran Community

As we prepare for the Orchard Woods Health Center COVID vaccine clinic on Friday, January 15, we have had questions regarding availability of the vaccine for residents outside of Orchard Woods. We are still waiting for information from our government partner agencies as to when it will be available for residents outside of Orchard Woods, but we thought it would be helpful to all to provide additional information regarding the CDC's recommendations on prioritization and distribution of the vaccine.

As with all things COVID-19 related, the protocols, guidelines and recommendations are rapidly developing and changing as both the federal and state governments are working in real-time to implement their decisions. With our partner agencies, The Village at Orchard Ridge is strongly advocating for the vaccine to be available to all residents of our community as quickly as possible.

According to the CDC, demand for the COVID-19 vaccination is expected to exceed supply during the first months of the national COVID-19 vaccination program.<sup>i</sup> For this reason the CDC looked to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) to provide recommendations to the states and their governors to determine the priority of the vaccine in their respective states.

The following information is from a recent resource from LeadingAge, a national organization representing the field of aging services, of which Orchard Ridge and National Lutheran Communities & Services is an active member. LeadingAge and LeadingAge Virginia, the state-level organization, have been very instrumental in helping us navigate resources and protocols surrounding COVID-19.

***On priority of the vaccine:***

**Q: Who is making recommendations and determinations on the priority for COVID-19 vaccinations?<sup>ii</sup>**

*A: The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is making coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID19) vaccination recommendations based on input from an Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). ACIP is a federal advisory committee made up of medical and public health experts who develop recommendations on the use of vaccines in the U.S. public. ACIP holds regular meetings, which are open to the public and provide opportunity for public comment. After ACIP publishes its guidance and recommendations, it is then up to the states and their governors to determine the priority of vaccinations in their respective states. States are working in real time to develop vaccination priorities anticipating a first round of vaccines doses in the coming weeks. Many have interim plans in*

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*place for vaccine allocation, and an initial analysis of these by Leading Age finds that states are prioritizing long-term care residents and workers in their plans. The ACIP recommendations may help inform state plan refinements and/or continued prioritization of long-term care.*

***On the expected phases of vaccine availability in Virginia:***

**Q: What are the expected phases of vaccine availability in Virginia?**

*A: Based on information from the Virginia Department of Health<sup>iii</sup>, Phase 1a includes health care workers and long-term care residents and staff. The Phase 1b (frontline essential workers and people 75 and older) and Phase 1c (people 65-74, people 16-64 with high-risk medical conditions and other essential workers) have not yet been defined by the Virginia Department of Health. In Virginia, Phase 1a vaccines are being distributed through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Pharmacy Partnership program.*

***On independent living residents' availability of the vaccine in Phase 1a:***

**Q: Is "independent living" included in the Pharmacy Partnership or not?<sup>iv</sup>**

*A: The Pharmacy Partnership does not include stand-alone independent living and does not officially include people living in IL on a Lifeplan (LPC) or CCRC campus. However, there is some flexibility in how this is carried out. For instance, jurisdictions may elect to include IL residents of LPCs. The CVS/Walgreens partners will work with states and jurisdictions on these determinations. Unofficially, it is also possible that there will be additional vaccine doses when all staff on the campus and all nursing home and assisted living residents have been immunized. Decisions might be made about how to use those doses. It's also important to keep in mind that the Pharmacy Partnership clinics are the "kickstart" to COVID-19 vaccines; there will be other pharmacy clinics in communities after this first wave. (updated 12/18/2020)*

**NOTE: The Village at Orchard Ridge has specifically requested that all IL residents be included in the CVS vaccine clinic. During the community's registration process, this request was denied. We will continue to advocate for inclusion, as well as maximize the opportunity of any additional vaccines doses available on vaccine day.**

Our position as an independent living congregate community positions us more strongly in the vaccine pipeline, but individuals living in the community should continue to communicate with their physicians on accessibility, as well as their recommendations for the vaccine based on the individual's medical history and conditions.

We will continue to provide information as it becomes available, and more importantly, we will continue to advocate for vaccine availability for all residents in our community.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6949e1.htm>

<sup>ii</sup> [https://www.leadingage.org/sites/default/files/FAQs%20and%20Resources%20on%20COVID-19%20Vaccines%20-%20Dec%202015.pdf?\\_ga=2.123426827.161239603.1609592854-2087412635.1609592854](https://www.leadingage.org/sites/default/files/FAQs%20and%20Resources%20on%20COVID-19%20Vaccines%20-%20Dec%202015.pdf?_ga=2.123426827.161239603.1609592854-2087412635.1609592854)

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/vaccination/>

<sup>iv</sup> [https://www.leadingage.org/sites/default/files/FAQs%20and%20Resources%20on%20COVID-19%20Vaccines%20-%20Dec%202015.pdf?\\_ga=2.123426827.161239603.1609592854-2087412635.1609592854](https://www.leadingage.org/sites/default/files/FAQs%20and%20Resources%20on%20COVID-19%20Vaccines%20-%20Dec%202015.pdf?_ga=2.123426827.161239603.1609592854-2087412635.1609592854)