



Spectrum Health
Lakeland

Joint News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Berrien County Moving Forward with Next Phase of COVID-19 Vaccination Effort

Hospital and health department partner to ensure availability of vaccines to community

(Benton Harbor, MI) --- The Berrien County Health Department and Spectrum Health Lakeland are working collaboratively to provide COVID-19 vaccines as quickly as possible to all those who are eligible and interested throughout the community. While cooperative planning for vaccination has been underway for months, as of today, both agencies are began offering limited vaccine appointments to those in the [next phase of eligibility](#) that had been announced by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services last week. Because quantities of the vaccine are still very limited – and will be for the foreseeable future – the joint approach prioritizes the highest-risk populations for severe COVID-19 illness due to risk factors, such as age, or exposure due to occupation.

To reach the populations in these next phases, particularly those over the age of 65, and schedule them for vaccine appointments, the Berrien County Health Department (BCHD) and Spectrum Health Lakeland will be working from cross-referenced waiting lists of those who have expressed interest in getting the vaccine. In addition, both agencies are targeting essential workers by coordinating directly with employers and other partner agencies to reach senior centers, homebound individuals, and those at higher vulnerability. At this time, clinics operated by both Spectrum Health Lakeland and BCHD are by appointment only and are not open to the general public.

Community members should not call their health care provider's office for vaccination scheduling or show up at the Health Department anticipating getting their vaccination without an appointment. The most efficient way to indicate interest in receiving a COVID-19 vaccine is to complete the [pre-registration wait list available](#) on the Berrien County Health Department website (for those over the age of 65 and employers of essential workers) or complete the survey available via [Lakeland MyChart](#) located under "questionnaires" in the My Record section. People are encouraged to assist family and friends without internet access or email with the online pre-registration and waitlist process if possible.

The Health Department and Spectrum Health Lakeland will be using these wait lists as the primary means of confirming eligibility and notifying community members when they are able

to schedule a vaccination. Please note: completing either vaccine survey does not mean individuals will be scheduled for an appointment immediately. Vaccine supplies are continue to be limited and are allocated to Berrien County by the state week by week. Both Spectrum Health Lakeland and the Health Department are asking for continued patience as planning is ongoing and appointment availability continues to expand.

More information about the process for vaccination in Berrien County is available at bchdmi.org/COVID19 or spectrumhealthlakeland.org/COVID19.

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