



January 26, 2021

Dear FutureCare Staff, Residents and Families,

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones safe and well. I wanted to update you on the latest developments in Maryland's vaccine rollout and how they affect our FutureCare residents, families and staff.

First, I'd like to thank those of you who have received the vaccine. The vaccine brings us closer to ending the global pandemic and breaking the social isolation that has impacted all of us this year. Throughout this pandemic, as our country and communities have endured illness, isolation, and grief, we have come to understand as never before that human beings are not built for isolation. We need one another, and we are all responsible for one another. I'm proud of our staff's professionalism and participation in this collective, global effort to end the COVID-19 pandemic. By getting vaccinated, each of us is doing our part to put COVID-19 behind us.

If you have not been vaccinated, or authorized your family member to get vaccinated, I implore you to act now! Supplies are limited in quantity and this means your window of opportunity to act is limited. If you change your mind later, you may lose your place of priority.

Maryland has now opened vaccine eligibility to additional groups. Phase 1B, which includes assisted living facilities, began last week and Phase 1C, which includes adults ages 65-74, began this week.

Please take a moment to use the following links to find out more about the vaccination priority groups, where you can get the vaccine, and how to make an appointment if you are not able to participate in a FutureCare Facility clinic.

- COVID-19 Vaccine in MD: <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/vaccine>
- MD Vaccination Sites: <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/maryland-retail-vaccination-sites>

Given the prioritization of the vaccine, younger and healthier individuals are in the last priority group and may not get vaccinated until later this year. Thus, it is crucial that you take advantage of this opportunity to get vaccinated through the facility vaccination program.

So far, vaccine sites do not take walk-ins. Even if you qualify to get the vaccine now, you may still have to wait to make your appointment due to the limited number of available vaccination appointments.

Here are few key facts to remember about the COVID-19 vaccine:

- The COVID-19 vaccine has a high efficacy rate of 95%.
- Two doses of the vaccine are needed, the second taking place about 3-4 weeks after the first dose.
- Side effects are typically mild, with the most reported side effect being soreness at the injection site.
- None of the authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines or COVID-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.
- Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, you should receive the vaccine even if you have recovered from COVID-19.
- There is currently a limited supply of COVID-19 vaccine in the United States. Nursing homes were top priority in the vaccine distribution, Phase 1A. Again, Maryland is now in Phase 1C.

For more information about the COVID-19 vaccine, please read the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) vaccine FAQs here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html>

Our facility's designated Vaccine Clinic Coordinator and I are here to answer questions and guide you through this process. Whether you have questions about the vaccine, the Facility's vaccine clinic schedule or completing the vaccine consent form, we welcome you to ask questions via phone, text or email. Keeping you and your loved ones safe and informed is our top priority and our privilege.

Stay safe and well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sheikh".

Fatima Sheikh, MD, CMD, MPH
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