

ECE Provider Conference Call #15
Thursday, January 21, 2021
1:30 p.m.

The call began at 1:32 p.m. by the conference operator. Dr. Kimberly Krzanowski, Executive Director of the Office of Early Learning, Department of Education (DOE) welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining today's call. The call was recorded. We will have brief agency updates, a presentation and a Q&A session with Dr. Karryl Rattay. We have 230 participant on today's call.

Those providing information for today's call are:

Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, DOE, Associate Secretary of Early Childhood Support
Betty Gail Timm, Administrator, DOE, Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL)
Thomas Hall, Deputy Chief, Division of Social Services (DSS), POC Office
Jamie Mack, Division of Public Health (DPH)
Dr. Karyl Rattay, MD, MS, Director of the Division of Public Health (DPH)

Betty Gail Timm, Administrator of the Office of Child Care Licensing, DOE: Betty Gail's update included the following:

Thank you to the many child care providers who have continue to navigate these uncharted waters with determination, enthusiasm, and grace. I cannot begin to tell you how much I admire you for what you are doing each day for the children and families you serve.

On January 14, OCCL sent updated guidance modification to family, large family, and center child care providers. If you did not receive that email, please contact your local OCCL office to ensure we have the correct email address in our system for you.

I would also like to thank Jamie Mack, from the Division of Public Health for being such a strong partner with OCCL. We receive guidance from DPH when we provide you with updated health information.

I want to recap a couple notable changes that were contained in the latest modification.

- More information was added to define the term, "close contact." Being in *close contact* with a person with confirmed COVID-19 infection means you were in near them while they were infectious. The infectious period starts 48 hours before symptoms appear or begins the date of the test with a positive result for those without symptoms. It continues until the end of the person's isolation period.

You were in close contact if:

- ✓ You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period while they were infectious. OR
- ✓ You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19; OR
- ✓ You had direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them); OR

- ✓ You shared eating or drinking utensils; OR
- ✓ They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on
- ✓ You.

If you are a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case, you must stay home and maintain social distancing through the end of your quarantine period. This time has been shortened to 10 days from the date of your last exposure to a positive case. This period can be shortened to a 7-day quarantine if a PCR (nasal swab) test is performed on or after Day 5 of quarantine and you have a negative result. If a rapid test is used, it should not be done before Day 7.

Monitor yourself daily for symptoms, including checking your temperature. In addition, you should continue to strictly adhere to prevention recommendations—wear a face covering, wash hands frequently, social distance by staying 6 feet away from others, and avoid gatherings with persons outside your household.

If a COVID-19 test was taken and a positive result was returned, the staff member or child must isolate at home for 10 days following the first diagnostic test, or the first day of symptoms, whichever came first. The quarantine can end after 10 days if the individual has been symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of any medication to reduce symptoms. A health care provider or the Division of Public Health can provide a letter stating that the individual has been released from monitoring to the patient but this is not required.

Please contact public health if you have questions regarding your specific situation.

Kimberly Krzanowski, Executive Director, Office of Early Learning, DOE: Kim provided an update on Enhanced Reimbursement (ER):

- ER application opened on January 15, 2021 and all eligible providers can submit for the month of January.
- The same formula is being used as before related to capacity and vacant slots.
- For any provider who received ER in 2020, please note ER funds are considered taxable.
- Providers will receive a 1099 to use with for tax filing purposes.

Tom Hall, Deputy Director, Division of Social Services (DSS): Thanked everyone for this time to provide an update, which includes:

DSS continues to provide updates to providers through our Provider Portal, Listserv, and the mychildde.org website, and provide direct assistance to providers through the POCResource mailbox and POC helpline.

For the months of January through March:

- Beginning this month, the POC program is establishing a pre-pandemic baseline or floor payment for all POC providers. The baseline month is February 2020. The baseline amount

calculation is February 2020 billing plus parent co-pays amounts for all authorized children during that same month.

- All open sites will receive up to 2 payments for services provided in January.
- The first payment will be for the actual POC attendance that occurred in January, the second payment will be the difference between the baseline month amount and the actual attendance billed.
- This structure allows the POC program to capture actual POC attendance data while ensuring providers continue to receive funding equal to at least their pre-COVID billing rate while census remain low or are restricted by pandemic rules.
- Providers have been given the option to choose another baseline month instead of February, which can be done by contacting POCResource@delaware.gov. The alternative months are December 2019, January 2020, and March 2020. Billing Guidance for January is attached to these minutes. Request should be made by January 22, 2021.
- DSS continues to pay the parent co-pay.
- Please do not collect copays and please reimburse any families that may have paid in advance for the month of November.

DSS is wrapping up the Market Rate Survey this week. The study collects the fees charged to the public by childcare providers. If you have not provided your rates to the study yet, please do so by calling *Research America* at (215) 744-7677. Let them know you want to provide your rates for the Delaware Child Care Market Rate Survey. Market Rate Study Survey information is attached to these minutes.

We are also continuing the Cost of Care study. As opposed to fees charged, this study collects data about how much it costs to provide quality child care. Those who have been selected for that study have been notified of their selection for the study. At this point, we have data on approximately 70 of 200 participants chosen for that study. If you were chosen, please continue to participate by providing the information we need.

The data we collect will be combined with the data from a similar study recently completed by the Department of Education. The combined data will give us a sample of 28% of the provider community. We plan to have both the Market Rate Study and Cost of Care Study completed in February. In February we will also begin work of the cost of care estimator tool.

Regarding new money received, Congress recently passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, which depicts states that were awarded additional funds to their CCDBG grant. This is specifically to assist states in addressing the new costs and demands created by the pandemic in the early learning community.

We have not been given detailed guidance in terms of how we can spend the money, exactly how much it will be, or when we will actually receive it. We have not received any of this new money yet. The estimated amount of new funds is \$25 to \$27 million. DSS will be working with our federal partners, DOE, advocates, providers, legislators and others as we determine the best ways to use this new money to meet the needs of the childcare community.

At DSS, the POC staff are on duty and ready to accept calls and POC questions via the POC Helpline which is 302-255-9670 or via email at POCResource@delaware.gov. As always you may reach out to

me directly at 255-9605 or Thomas.Hall@delaware.gov. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to Delaware's families.

Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, Associate Secretary, Early Childhood Support, DOE: Yvette thanked everyone for joining the call and provided an update on the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. The State of Delaware has started the process for registration for vaccination of those 65 years and older. See DOE's website for more information.

For child care providers specifically, information will be sent out the weeks of January 25 and February 1. It will provide information for how providers will register to get the vaccine. For now, please know that there is a lot of logistics going on behind the scenes to put this in place. We will be sure to advise everyone on availability as soon as we can.

Getting the vaccine is voluntary, but we do hope that providers will consider getting the vaccine as a safety precaution as you serve children and families.

Also, DOE and DHSS are working to figure out options to continue to provide Enhanced Reimbursement to providers. We will share any details with you as soon as we can. If anyone has any questions, email Yvette directly at yvette.sanchezfuentes@doe.k12.de.us.

Dr. Karyl Rattay, MD, MS, Director of the Division of Public Health: Dr. Rattay gave a PowerPoint presentation ([slide deck attached to these minutes](#)) which includes some really great information for future reference. Dr. Rattay noted:

DPH is excited about rolling into Phase 1B. We hope that in the coming months we will start vaccination for child care providers. Unfortunately, less vaccine is coming than we had anticipated. This means vaccination of Delawareans may take more time than we originally thought. Please know that providers are on the top of the list for Phase 1B.

The phased approach was recommended by a federal advisory committee and a local Delaware ethical committee. This recommendation is based on how we can best reduce deaths and hospitalizations. We know essential services must also be protected.

Given the supply, it is going to take two months to everyone vaccinated in Phase 1B (over 200,000 people in Phase 1B). We have seen no serious adverse side effects in Delaware.

Important facts to be aware of:

- Concerns around the development of this vaccine being done too quickly. The appropriate and normal studies, research and approvals have been done. Over 40,000 individuals were vaccinated in clinical trials, including racial groups. This group did not include pregnant women or HIV-positive individuals.
- There was an all hands on deck approach to move this vaccine forward. While the vaccine was being studied, it was also being mass-manufactured which saved time.
- We hoped for more than 50% effectiveness, but both vaccines are 94% effective in preventing the COVID-19 infection.
- Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are not approved for kids. Kids should not be vaccinated at this time.
- Pfizer vaccine is to be stored at -70 degrees, but this has not been problematic.

- Two doses of the same type of the vaccine are required – about 21-28 days apart.
- Myths:
 - vaccine does not infect you with the virus
 - allergic reactions can happen (none in Delaware), of those that occurred all have been among individuals who have experienced such a reaction in the past
- Side effects are soreness where the shot is given, maybe some fatigue. Motrin and Tylenol are fine for this. Having side effects is a good sign. It shows your immune system is responding to the vaccine. Side effects are more commonly observed after the second dose of vaccine. If you have any concerns about the vaccine, talk to your healthcare provider.
- Even if vaccinated you should still wear a mask, practicing social distancing and hand washing.

For childcare providers who are over 65 years old, you have options. You can register on DPH website to get put on wait list (because you're 65) or you can wait until they do the vaccines for child care providers. Try to get it as soon as you can. The vaccine is free.

Questions and Answers Session

Q. Do we know what other stages of Phase 1B will look like?

A. We know educators (including K-12 and child care providers) will be priority in Phase 1B, and then correctional officers.

Q. Will you work to vaccinate all subgroups within the Phase 1B?

A. Yes, we will. We don't need to start one group before starting the new group.

Q. What is the DPH COVID Epi School Data Form?

A. Contact Jamie.Mack@delaware.gov for more information.

Q. What is the COVID 19 Navigation Flowchart?

A. This can be found on the DPH, Healthy Community Page – see [here](#).

Q. What are the quarantine and other procedures one should follow after getting vaccinated?

A. The CDC recommendation does not change just because you have been vaccinated. We do expect there may be a change in recommendations in the future as more people get vaccinated.

Q. What is the efficiency of the vaccine regarding getting COVID, but not transmitting it?

A. We know the vaccine is effective in preventing the virus, but individuals may still be able to transmit it. Most vaccines do both, and we think this will be true for the COVID vaccine, but we do not have this data yet.

Q. Have quarantine requirements changed at this point?

A. They have not changed based on travel or because vaccination has started. One travel-related quarantine requirement applies to those traveling for sports tournaments. When you return you must quarantine. See FAQ document on DPH contact tracing page - [here](#).

Q. Is there a link to get a home testing kit?

A. We do still encourage people to still get tested as vaccination is happening. Link to home test kit is [here](#).

Q. Is testing recommended after you have been vaccinated?

A. If you have been vaccinated and ten days later you have symptoms, you don't need to test. But if it's only been two days, you could get tested to see if you have COVID.

Q. Which vaccine may be offered to child care workers?

A. This is dependent on where they get the vaccine and vaccine availability. Both vaccines are very effective and well-tolerated. It doesn't matter which vaccine you get, except that you need to get the same vaccine for both doses.

Q. Can center administrator send all their staff to get vaccinated at once?

A. We recommend you split up your staff for vaccination. You should choose your highest risk staff (oldest workers, medical conditions, those interacting with children) to get vaccinated first. Additionally, it would be hard to logically organize it so that everyone is vaccinated in your program at once.

Q. Regarding potential reactions, is it people who have food allergies or those who have had a reaction to a medication in the past are more likely to have a reaction?

A. Most people who have had an allergic reaction to the vaccine have had a reaction to a medication in the past (not food allergies). As a precaution, people are advised to wait 30 minutes before leaving vaccination site.

Q. Are there any long-term effects of the vaccines?

A. We have not seen any long-term effects of the vaccine, though this will be monitored closely. Long term effects are extremely rare. Additionally, we have heard concern that the vaccine may lead to reproductive issues. There is no scientific evidence of this.

Q. Do we know about the availability of the second doses?

A. We have been reassured that second doses are available, they will not be available as quickly as we originally thought.

Q. How does a provider go about scheduling an appointment to be vaccinated? Do they have to register now?

A. DOE and DPH are working together on the path forward for child care workers. This information will be shared as soon as it is available.

Q. Regarding the new variants that have surfaced, do we anticipate any change in mask guidelines because of them?

A. We have not seen any variants in Delaware, but we are on the lookout for them. They are more contagious. We will not need to change any mask requirements at this time. We encourage everyone to be very diligent on mask wearing.

Q. Do I need a voucher to get a vaccine?

A. A voucher can be issued by an employer and it simply means you can go get vaccinated at an event site. For example, a firefighter might get a voucher from the firehouse and take it to a pharmacy or vaccination event.

Q. As people get their first doses, are they given info about their second dose?

A. Yes. For child care provider, you will have specific opportunities to get those second doses. For general public, they will get instructions on how to get their second doses.

Q. Do we have any info about booster or how long the vaccine lasts?

A. It is too soon to know this, but we are gathering data around this.

Q. If someone has recovered from COVID, how long are they not considered to be a close contact?

A. They would not be considered a close contact for 90 days after they have recovered.

Q. If I had COVID-19 recently, should I get the vaccine?

A. It is fine to get the vaccine after having COVID-19.

Kimberly Krzanowski, Executive Director of the Office of Early Learning, DOE: Thanked everyone for their time today. Yvette Sanchez Fuentes added a special thanks for Jamie Mack and Dr. Rattay for all this information. Yvette reassured everyone that we will be organizing multiple ways child care providers will be able to get vaccine. Once we have all the information, we will send that information out to you. Kim closed the meeting by indicating the minutes and related documents will be sent out as soon as they are ready.