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INCLUSION & INNOVATION



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January 16, 2021

Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor, State of New York  
Executive Chamber  
The Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

We once again thank you for your efforts to prioritize many individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and the staff who support them in the 1A vaccine distribution group. This recognition of the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the I/DD population and prioritization is greatly appreciated.

Unfortunately, we must write to inform you that the recent inclusion of people in the 1B distribution group, and the subsequent expansion of that group, has effectively negated the previous priority population designation for people with I/DD and many other groups in 1A.

With the opening of the state vaccination sites and the re-allocation of vaccine to these sites, this has reduced vaccine supply and availability for the 1A population to the point that appointments have been cancelled the latter half of this past week and through the weekend. Not only is this unintended consequence of concern for those in the priority population who have not yet received the vaccine, but it will likely result in 1A designated people having significant difficulty attaining the second vaccine dose in a timely manner.

We understand that increased supply, expected soon, will eventually alleviate this issue. But until that time, the state's policy, which correctly prioritized certain populations, is being undermined. While supply challenges continue to exist, we ask that you allocate the majority of available vaccines to the 1A population until such time as those individuals have been vaccinated, thereby re-establishing the state's initial prioritization policy.

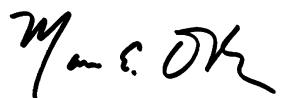
We are grateful that you included people with I/DD in 1A. But these latest changes, in effect, serve to exclude this population from receiving the vaccine. This is why your immediate attention is needed and much appreciated.

We cannot overstate the urgency and importance of this matter. And we thank you in advance for your attention to this.

Very truly yours,



Michael Seereiter  
President & CEO  
NY Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation



Maureen O'Brien  
President & CEO  
New York State Industries for the Disabled



Erik Geizer  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Arc New York