



# Pennsylvania MEDICAL SOCIETY®

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February 17, 2021

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Ms. Alison Beam  
Acting Secretary of Health  
Pennsylvania Department of Health  
625 Forster Street 8th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Acting Secretary Beam,

I am writing today to seek clarification on behalf of our members that are hearing that the Department of Health (DOH) is cutting them out of the COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan. This sort of information is disconcerting to our physicians who take their patients' care and lives very seriously. It has also led to a generally negative reaction from many in the physician community. Additionally, the Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) is concerned that patients who turn to their primary care physicians for care and medical advice may not go to an unfamiliar site or practitioner for a vaccine.

From PAMED's discussions with you and your team, it is our understanding that the current constriction of the vaccine distribution to larger systems and pharmacies is a temporary solution to the challenge of distributing a small allocation of vaccines to the most arms possible as quickly as possible, while gaining a better understanding of this process.

Assuming our interpretation is correct, PAMED asks that you clarify or confirm a few key points that will help our physicians understand what the future holds for them and their patients.

- Independent physicians are not banned or removed from being a vaccination site in the future. This is a temporary fix to the problem outlined above.
- It is the intent of the DOH to use all registered vaccination sites as more COVID-19 vaccine become readily available.
- Patients who receive their first shot may receive their second shot at the site of origin for the first shot.

We understand that it is difficult to determine when this constriction will end. We do ask, in recognition of our members' concerns, that you identify a rough timeline or metric being used to determine when the DOH would likely utilize more, smaller vaccination sites, like our independent physicians' practices.

Thank you for your efforts to combat the pandemic, address physician concerns, and for your ongoing collaboration with PAMED. We ask for a prompt response in order to address our members' concerns and correct any misinformation or misunderstandings.

Sincerely,

Edward Balaban, DO, FACP, FASCO, FCPP

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Pennsylvania Medical Society

400 Winding Creek Blvd.  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050-1885

**Membership Inquiries**  
(800) 228-7823

Tel: (800) 228-7823  
Fax: (855) 943-3285  
Email: KnowledgeCenter@pamedsociety.org  
www.pamedsociety.org