



COVID-19 Response

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2021 California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Challenge Awards COVID-19 Vaccine Redistribution Hub

Overview – DPH coordinated and implemented a process to distribute the COVID-19 vaccine to a large network of health care providers throughout the County regardless of location and number of doses requested.

Challenge – Health care providers were able to enroll in California's COVID-19 Vaccination Program to become approved COVID-19 vaccine providers for their local communities. However, up until August 2021, enrolled providers could only request large and specific quantities of vaccines due to manufacturer shipping limitations; being at least 1,170 dose increments for Pfizer and 100 dose increments for Moderna and Janssen. Small practices, local pharmacies, and other private practices were at a disadvantage because they did not have the capacity to store large quantities or the demand to utilize all the doses within the required utilization timelines set forth by California Department of Public Health (CDPH). DPH faced the challenge of empowering these small providers who were willing to serve the community.

Solution – DPH assembled a Distribution and Allocation Team (DAT) that pioneered the first COVID-19 vaccine redistribution hub in the State. The team supported onboarding providers in compliance with the State's requirements, provided technical assistance, and implemented a County-specific ordering process that allowed providers to order and receive smaller quantities of vaccines within 3 to 5 days of request. The process allowed providers to request small doses (less than the State's minimum order requirement) via an Electronic COVID-19 Vaccine Request Form. DPH convened with pharmacists, inventory specialists, and couriers from the Office of Emergency Services to deliver vaccines throughout the County's 20,000 square miles. DPH requested large quantities of the vaccine regularly and maintained storage in accordance

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with State guidelines. Pharmacists pre-packaged the vaccines in temperature-controlled transports and redistributed various amounts of vaccines to health care providers.

Innovation – One of the most innovative aspects of the redistribution hub was the development of the Electronic COVID-19 Vaccine Request Form. This form served as a grand tracking system, storing records of all allocations and redistributions including quantity of vials, date and time of deliveries, cold-chain management, temperature excursions, and lot numbers. This tracking system allowed the DAT Team to account for every single dose allocated throughout the County at any given time. For example, when the Federal vaccine pause for Moderna Lot #41L20A was announced, the DAT Team was able to track down and notify providers that were affected by the pause within 30 minutes. The ability to immediately halt COVID-19 vaccine administration across the County within 30 minutes was unique and only possible due to the diligent tracking and close relationships built with providers from the redistribution process.

Results – By developing a redistribution hub led by a team driven by excellent customer service, over 300 healthcare providers from the heights of the Big Bear Mountains to the flats of the Joshua Tree Desert were able to provide COVID-19 vaccines to their local residents. Since December 2020, DPH has made 1,278 deliveries bringing over 330,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines to providers to safely vaccinate our communities. DPH minimized the barriers smaller healthcare providers initially faced and reduced potential waste of COVID-19 vaccines from large dose orders.

Replicability – The program exemplifies a best practice that can be replicated by other California counties. Replication will include onboarding staff and a central distribution location in which vaccine orders can be disassembled, repackaged, and redistributed. A team of highly motivated individuals with an aptitude for customer service was key to the success of this program.

Additional Resources – [San Bernardino County Vaccine Distribution Process](#),
[How to Become a Provider Resource Guide](#)