





# **COVID-19 Vaccination Preparations for Rhode Island**

**Tricia Washburn**

Chief, Center for  
Preventive Services

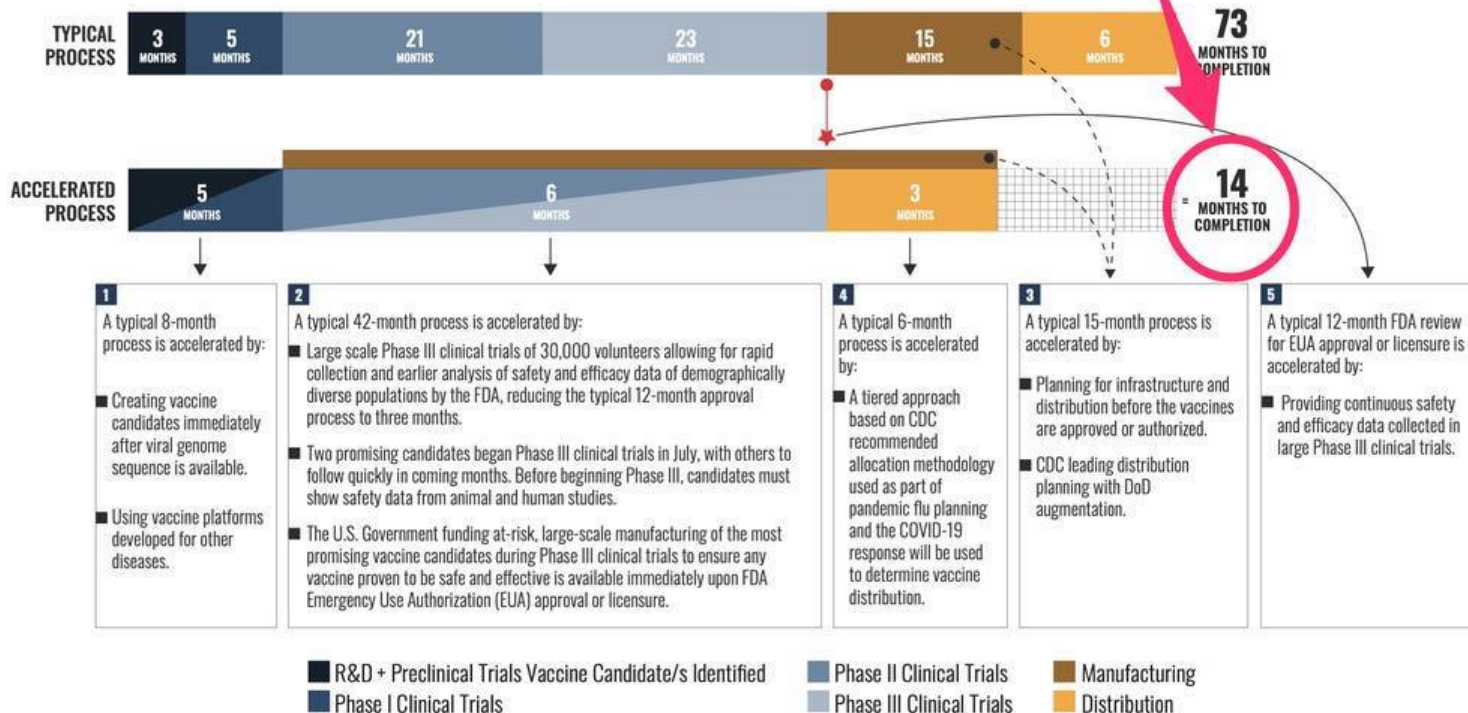
October 1, 2020

# Operation Warp Speed



## OPERATION WARP SPEED ACCELERATED VACCINE PROCESS

**MISSION:** Deliver 300 million doses of safe and effective vaccine by 1 January 2021.



# CDC Issued Planning Assumptions and Scenarios



## Key Planning Assumptions

- **Limited COVID-19 vaccine doses may be available** by early November 2020, but COVID-19 vaccine supply will increase substantially in 2021.
- Initial supply of COVID-19 vaccines will be made available under an **Emergency Use Authorization** issued by the FDA
- **Cold chain** storage and handling requirements for each COVID-19 vaccine product will vary from refrigerated (2 ° to 8°C) to frozen (-20°C) to ultra-cold (-60° to -80°C) for the vaccine. Stability testing is ongoing that may impact requirements.
- **Two doses** of COVID-19 vaccine, **separated by ≥21 or ≥28 days**, will be needed for immunity for most vaccine. Second-dose reminders for patients will be necessary. Both doses will need to be with the same product, which will require strategies to ensure the correct match of COVID-19 vaccine products and dosing intervals.
- May require **reconstitution with diluent or adjuvant for some vaccines** at the point of administration
- The federal government will issue guidance on groups to target for initial COVID-19 vaccination. For planning jurisdictions should focus on critical workforce that provides **health care and maintains essential functions** of society , **Staff and residents in long-term care and assisted living facilities**
- Allocation of COVID-19 vaccine to jurisdictions will be based on **multiple factors**, including:
  - Populations recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (with input from the National Academy of Medicine)
  - Current epidemiology of COVID-19
  - COVID-19 vaccine production and availability



# Examples of Critical Populations for Targeting Vaccination

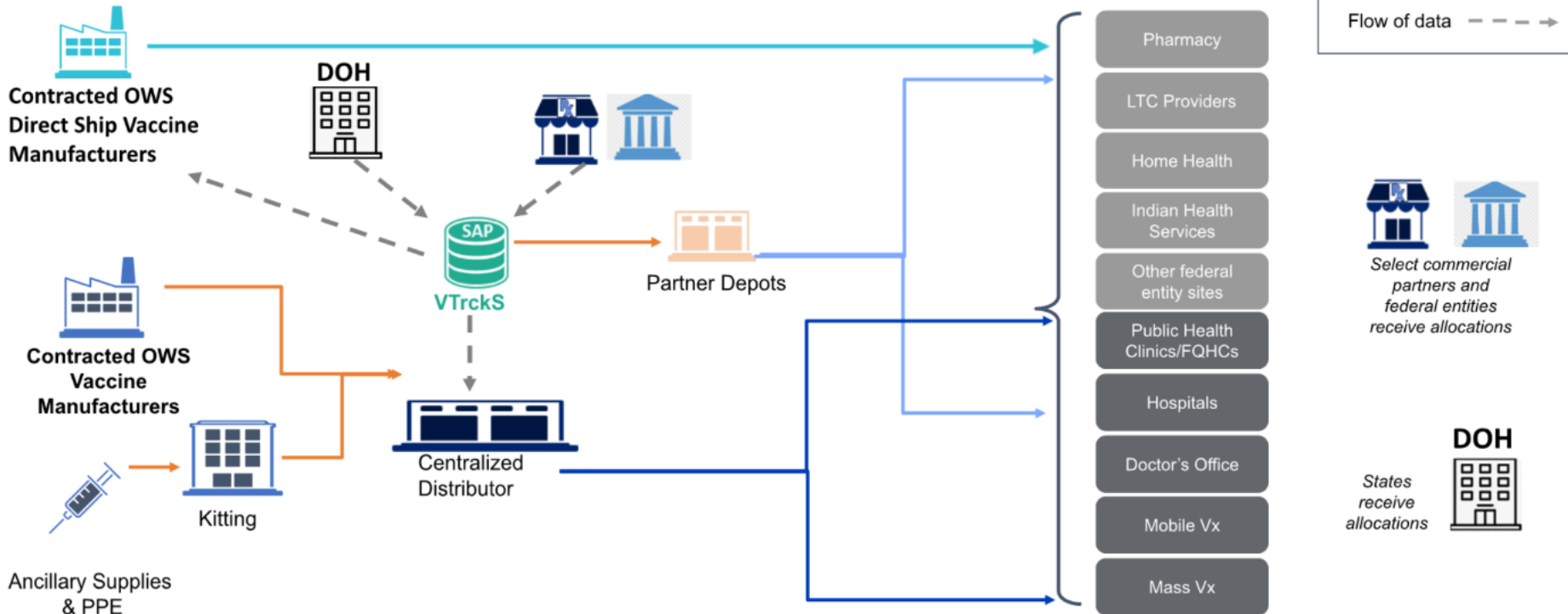
People at increased risk for COVID-19  
(e.g. congregate settings)

Critical infrastructure

People with limited access to vaccines



# High-level Overview of Distribution



OWS coordination cell

## System needs to allow for:

- ✓ **Control:** Targeted populations
- ✓ **Tracking:** Where the vaccine is (End-to-End visibility)
- ✓ **Uptake:** Know when shots are administered

# Focus on Seasonal Flu



- Promoting expanded seasonal flu vaccination
  - Reduce illness
  - Preserve healthcare resources
  - Preserve PPE
  - **Test new modalities we plan to utilize for COVID vaccine**
- 700,000 doses this season



# Typical Vaccine Opportunities



- SSV program enrolls over 600 locations for flu vaccine:
  - Hospitals
  - Urgent cares
  - FQHCs
  - Colleges/universities
  - Provider offices
  - Pharmacies (grocery stores)
  - School-located clinics
  - Nursing homes/assisted living communities
  - Employer-sponsored clinics
  - Public Clinics







# New or Enhanced Opportunities

- Municipal-sponsored clinics
  - MEDS-PODs
- COVID-19 Testing Site co-location
  - Rhode Island Convention Center
  - Stop & Shop (Stop & Shop pharmacies + Alert Ambulance)
  - Dexter Street Walk-up
- Rhode Island Blood Center
  - Largest annual blood drive at Crowne Plaza December 21

# New or Enhanced Opportunities



- New public clinics:
  - Most HEZs sites
  - AIDS Care Ocean State
  - Project Weber/RENEW
  - Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless
  - Hospitality Association
- Mobile clinics
  - BCBSRI (senior housing and shopping centers), Gloria Gemma Foundation,

# Mass Vaccination Support



- Enhanced flu vaccination funds, as well as COVID vaccination funds will support The Wellness Company and RI DMAT/MRC to support new vaccination efforts



RHODE ISLAND

# Targeted Outreach



- Those who:
  - Live in high-density communities
  - Speak languages other than English
  - Lack digital access
  - Lack of transportation



# Communications Campaigns



- Flu vaccine communications campaign underway
  - Large-scale media campaign vendors
    - Nail conducting formative research and developing the creative
    - RDW is placing the media buy
  - Conduct key informant interviews to build strong communications campaign
  - Work with community partners to amplify message
  - Modeling for development of COVID-19 vaccine campaign
  - Implementation science to assist in understanding barriers and facilitators of vaccine uptake specific to COVID-19 vaccination (K. Danko, Brown University)
  - Building campaigns to address vaccine confidence

# End-to-End Management System



- Registration
- Patient history/consent form
- Forms review
- Virtual check-in when arriving at site
- Priority access codes
- Real-time data recording
- Registry reporting



# What's Next



- Develop C-19 vaccine implementation group
- Informed by federal guidance, finalize RI operating model and micro-plan
- Finalize budget; issue contract and onboard partners
- Conduct research and key informant interviews for both vaccines to build strong communications campaign
- Use GIS to ensure saturation of vaccination sites statewide
- Evaluate flu vaccination operations and adjust, as necessary, for COVID vaccination

# Challenges



- Political pressure to vaccinate quickly vs. safely
  - Likelihood of first vaccines becoming available under EUA (not the end state, likely an interim step)
- Overcoming vaccine hesitancy
- Getting people to the right locations for the correct second dose vaccine
- Keeping up with data demands (e.g., how many people get vaccinated each day)
- Push for new providers to vaccinate (e.g., dentists, veterinarians, EMTs); PREP Act
- Communicating about policy decisions that differ from neighboring states
- Funding is unknown



# Field of Dreams or Mob of Madness?





## **Alysia Mihalakos, MPH**

Chief, Center for Emergency  
Preparedness and Response

401.222.8035

[Alysia.Mihalakos@health.ri.gov](mailto:Alysia.Mihalakos@health.ri.gov)

## **Tricia Washburn**

Chief, Center for Preventive  
Services

401.222.5922

[Tricia.Washburn@health.ri.gov](mailto:Tricia.Washburn@health.ri.gov)