



December 11, 2020

Dear ECH Residents and Family Members,

You have most likely heard that COVID-19 vaccines will soon be approved and ready for distribution – this is long awaited and exciting news. I understand you may have questions about the vaccine. Here is some important information:

- Elders and nursing home workers are the first persons to receive the vaccine because elders are the most vulnerable to the virus.
- The speed with which these vaccines were developed is not due to skipping important safety steps, but rather the result of focused, collaborative work performed by experts across the globe.
- Vaccines approved for use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration have undergone the same level of rigorous testing for safety and efficacy as other vaccines, and have been tested in tens of thousands of people, including older adults.
- Two independent advisory committees of experts from academic institutions also monitor vaccines to ensure their safety.
- The vaccine works by helping the body create antibodies to fight off the virus. Feeling discomfort after getting the vaccine means that the vaccine is doing its job and your body is making antibodies. As with any vaccine, there are possible side effects that may vary by person. Effects may include headache, muscle pains, fatigue, chills, fever and pain at the injection site.
- **The COVID-19 vaccine cannot you give you the coronavirus.**
- A vaccine is the only way to eradicate this disease as a community and protect residents from contracting the disease. [Click here](#) for further Q&A about the vaccine from The Society for Post-Acute & Long-term Care Medicine.

The Episcopal Church Home, along with thousands of other long term care facilities, is preparing for the deployment of the COVID-19 vaccine. Our pharmacy partner, HealthDirect Pharmacy Services, will manage the on-site vaccination clinics with oversight from our nursing leadership team.

- Pfizer and Moderna are the first two products receiving approval from the federal government. ECH is not sure which brand we will receive at this point.
- There is no cost for the vaccine.
- Vaccines will be administered by trained, licensed professionals (pharmacists and registered nurses).
- The full vaccine is a two-injection process, three-four weeks apart.
- Clinics at ECH are expected to begin by the end of 2020 and extend into 2021.
- ECH requires consent to provide this vaccine to your loved one. Staff will contact you in the coming days with more details.

I am confident that the worldwide, unprecedented scientific achievement of these COVID-19 vaccines will eventually allow us to enjoy life with our loved ones again. We look forward to doing our part in this effort by getting the COVID-19 vaccine, and hope you will join us. We will keep you informed of this process as we move forward, and if you have any vaccine related questions, please send them to COVID19@EpiscopalSeniorLife.org. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian Heppard

ESLC Medical Director