Dear SCDA Members:

This is much longer than we hoped it would be, but the South Carolina Dental Association (SCDA) wants to keep you informed of the latest information and to assure you that we are following the vaccine issue extremely closely.

1. As communicated by email this past Saturday, dentists and their team members have been moved into Phase 1a by DHEC and its’ Vaccine Advisory Committee (VAC). Please note that as of today, DHEC is working with their partners including the SCDA as well as numerous other independent providers and vaccination locations to onboard them and allocate and distribute vaccines in the coming weeks. **According to DHEC’s projections at this time, it is going to take several weeks to a couple of months to vaccinate all members of Phase 1a, so DHEC and the SCDA ask that you please be patient as we go through this process.**

2. In the meantime, the SCDA has learned of several hospitals around the state beginning to offer the vaccine to dentists in their communities. These include Self-Memorial in Greenwood, Grand Strand in Myrtle Beach and McLeod in Florence. Please note, these are individual hospital decisions and information is being sent from those hospitals to community health workers. These are not DHEC’s or SCDA initiatives.

3. Yesterday, the SCDA learned of two statewide initiatives being put in place by **MUSC** and **PRISMA**.

   A. **MUSC**: Effective immediately, MUSC is offering the vaccine to community providers included in Group 1a. MUSC has several vaccination sites available but travel to one of these sites may be required to be vaccinated. MUSC plans to add additional vaccine sites in the future depending on requests, but if you are interested in the most rapid vaccination, you will need to choose from current sites.

   Simply email covidvaccinerequest@musc.edu to get you and your team members enrolled to receive a vaccination at MUSC Health. **When emailing, please provide your organization’s name, a point of contact (with email address), and # of employees to be vaccinated.** The vaccination is NOT limited to providers and includes all staff who interact with patients.

   The SCDA has provided MUSC with a list of our membership and you should receive an email regarding this project later this week.

   Click Here for a letter from Dean Huja

   B. **PRISMA**: The SCDA has provided Prisma Health with its list of members which will be uploaded to the Center for Disease Control Vaccine Administration Management System (VAMS). SCDA Dentists should be receiving an email in the coming days from the VAMS system with information on how to enroll themselves for the vaccine. **Please do not use Internet Explorer when accessing VAMS. VAMS works best when using Google Chrome.**

   In the meantime, in order to begin the process of enrolling your staff in the vaccine system, Prisma has created the below link. It is extremely important that you add first name, last name and email address for each staff member to the attached file.

   https://prismahealth.org/getmedia/0e083251-5af1-4660-8008-8182db039713/VAMS_EmployeeUploadTemplate.csv

   Once complete, email the file to COVIDVaccine@PrismaHealth.org. This process is necessary for your staff to receive an email from VAMS.

Thank you for your patience as we help you navigate a system that has never existed before and is still being created as it is being implemented. DHEC is under extreme
pressure, along with all other state systems, with these circumstances. The decisions on who to vaccinate and how to put a vaccination program into effect are two very different processes that are under scrutiny. Please be aware that there are dentists in our community beating down the door for a vaccine because of the exposure risk in our work. There are also dentists in our state that say we have excellent, safe protocols that have proven to be effective and that dentists can wait so that more vulnerable people in our population might receive the vaccine.

As leaders in your communities, I ask you to please be aware of the sensitive and personal nature of these times. If you are fortunate enough to get the vaccine, please take it with respect and appreciation to all the work that has made it possible.

Sincerely,

Julia Mikell
SCDA President

South Carolina Dental Association