

Region VII Area Agency on Aging



- Located in the Central Region of Michigan
 - *7 rural counties*
 - *4 urban counties, with significant rural areas*
- In one of the most heavily impacted regions of the COVID-19 pandemic

History

- Region VII hired a Pharmacist in 2018 as part of a very successful Care Transitions Program
- In 2019 Region VII hired a Medical Director to help develop a medical practice
- Region VII, in 2019, updated nurses job descriptions to include providing medical care, including vaccines
- In 2020 Region VII became an influenza vaccine provider

AAA managed COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- What could be the barriers?

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- January 2021
 - *Region VII, in coordination with local health department, was able to receive enough Pfizer doses to vaccinate staff*
 - *Conducted a staff Vaccine clinic for first doses in early January*
 - *Second doses were provided to staff in late January*

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- January 2021
 - *Region VII applied with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to be COVID-19 vaccine provider*
 - *Shortly thereafter was one of the first non-health department or non-hospital accepted as a vaccine provider*
 - *At that time unable to obtain vaccine doses*

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- Why did they approve us to be a vaccinator?
 - *Region VII had experience with providing Influenza vaccines to homebound and elderly in fall of 2020*
 - *Already served a diverse, vulnerable and elderly population*
 - *Had connections with many of the local health departments*
 - *Had a plan in place regarding staffing to get individuals vaccinated*

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- February 2021
 - *Still Unable to obtain Vaccines of our own*
 - *Limited vaccines available in our communities*
 - *Local health departments and hospitals did not have enough doses to share*

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- March 2021
 - *Applied to take part in the MDHHS Community Outreach Pilot Project for Vaccination of Vulnerable Individuals Aged 60 and over*
 - *A Program targeting those 60 and older who were struggling to gain access to COVID-19 Vaccines*
 - *Region VII was one of less than 30 entities in Michigan accepted to participate*
 - *Provided with a total of 600 doses of Moderna vaccine allowing for us to vaccinate 300 individuals*

The COVID-19 Vaccine Program

■ March 2021

- *After being accepted to be in the pilot project the work started*
- *Had to vaccinate 300 people with their first dose in 3 weeks*
- *How?*
 - Clinics: conducted 2 clinics in communities where vaccine access was lacking, totaling about 170 individuals
 - In home: administered vaccines to homebound who could not obtain a dose, totaling about 130 individuals

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- March 2021
 - *Who did the work?*
 - Agency pharmacist did a significant amount of the scheduling and management
 - Agency Nurses administered a majority of the vaccines
 - Region VII non-administering staff assisted with paperwork and data collection

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

■ April 2021

- *As the Pilot project wrapped up Region VII was allowed to start ordering it's own supply of vaccine*
 - *Only ordered Moderna vaccine due to Pfizer's storage requirement and Johnson & Johnson not yet available*
- *Continued to provide vaccines to the homebound*
- *Conducted weekly clinics throughout region in areas where vaccines had not been readily available*
- *Started to vaccinate those 50 and older based on State guidelines*

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- May 2021
 - *Started to vaccinate younger individuals based on State guidelines*
 - But shouldn't our focus be the elderly?
 - *Yes, always was, BUT vaccinating any individuals, as long as recommended per State of Michigan guidelines, means protecting and elderly individual*

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- June – July 2021
 - *Continued to offer 1st and 2nd doses*
 - *Clinics slowly started to be reduced due to a lack of need*
 - *Homebound requests continued due to a lack of a provider to meet this need*
 - *Hired a vaccination nurse*
 - Focused on clinics, inventory, and providing vaccine to homebound
 - Funding available through a variety of grants

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- August 2021
 - *Region VII, realizing COVID-19 booster doses would become recommended, purchased a super deep freezer for the Pfizer Vaccine*
 - *Allowed for us to offer all 3 vaccines per patient wish/need*

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- August – September 2021
 - *MDHHS public health sector approached all AAAs in state requesting that they work with Assisted Living Facilities and Adult Foster Care Facilities to help with the expected 1st round of COVID-19 Booster doses*
 - Request to AAAs: Contact all Assisted Living Facilities and Adult Foster Care Facilities to assist them in transporting their clients to vaccine clinics and/or providers for boosters
 - Region VII's response: We can contact them but instead of offering transportation we will offer to come give vaccines
 - Why?
 - Safer, less patient disturbance, more direct service

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- October 2021
 - *Began offering booster doses to all eligible*
 - *Settings:*
 - **Clinic:** Called all who we had provided to in clinic previously
 - **Homebound:** Called all homebound who we had administered to
 - **Assisted Living and Adult Foster Care Facilities**
 - *Most of these individuals received first 2 doses through big name pharmacy*
 - *Big name pharmacy now refused to come out to give boosters*

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- October – December 2021
 - *Continued to offer initial and booster doses of COVID-19 Vaccines*
 - *Demand for boosters held strong through December 2021, then demand greatly diminished*

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- December 2021

- *Continued to offer initial and booster doses of COVID-19 Vaccines*
- *Contacted Michigan National Guard to request assistance with meeting homebound need due to staffing shortages*
 - **Notified that the Michigan National Guard could only do clinics and not allowed to do in-home administration**
- *Partnered with a local provider of nursing services in order to contract staff to provide vaccines*

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- March 2022 - current
 - *Continued to offer initial and booster doses of COVID-19 Vaccines*
 - *Demand increased again in April of 2022 with recommendation to get a second booster*
 - *Becoming the “go-to” agency for homebound administration in our area*
 - Local health departments are now referring homebound individuals to our agency

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- Program Accomplishments:

- *Over 2,200 COVID-19 vaccines administered to date*
- *Over 500 homebound individuals have been given at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine*

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- Program Barriers:
 - *Staffing: a lack of vaccinator staff in our region*
 - *Equipment: Expensive equipment is needed for storage*
 - *Costs: Staffing, mileage, equipment, etc*

Region VII COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- Program Future:
 - *Continuing to offer COVID-19 Vaccine Initial and Booster doses*
 - *Partnering with community agencies to ensure need is met*
 - *Preparing for “next pandemic”*
 - Partnering with MDHHS and aging network to increase vaccine availability
 - *Continued advocacy for funding to administer doses*

AAA managed COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- What can you do?

AAA managed COVID-19 Vaccine Program

- Takeaway:
 - *Any AAA has the capability to offer COVID-19 vaccines*
 - *Many AAAs have nursing staff available that can administer*





COVID-19 VACCINATIONS AT HOME:

Vaccinating Homebound Residents



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

@Bmore_Healthy 
BaltimoreHealth 
health.baltimorecity.gov

Objectives

- Participants will learn about forming effective partnerships with healthcare providers to administer in-home vaccinations.
- Participants will discuss how to address questions regarding COVID-19, vaccinations, boosters, and maintaining HIPPA compliance while communicating with constituents.
- Participants will brainstorm and discuss how to address common challenges that arise when conducting in-home vaccinations.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City



Description

- Older adults and individuals with disabilities are at an increased risk of hospitalization or death if diagnosed with COVID-19. While vaccinations are the most effective strategy to combat this increased risk, older adults and individuals with disabilities, many with mild to severe mobility impairments, face many obstacles to getting vaccinated.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

 **BALTIMORE
CITY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Description

- The AAA for the City of Baltimore piloted a homebound vaccination program with the goal of protecting the health of this vulnerable population, preventing the spread of the virus, and ensuring equitable distribution of the vaccine.
- By collaborating with local government agencies and community partners, the AAA developed, planned, and executed a HIPPA compliant homebound vaccination program that schedules in-home vaccinations, tracks vaccination statuses, and ultimately meets older adults where they are, at home.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City



Outcomes/Impact

- The program was designed to meet a pressing need in the community- to vaccinate older adults and disabled individuals who struggled to leave their homes, as well as the need to vaccinate their caregivers and ease the burden on these caregivers by alleviating the need to arrange transportation for their loved ones.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City



Outcomes/Impact

- The program also supports the goal of equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines by ensuring that individuals who are homebound or have other barriers to accessing traditional vaccine sites are able to get vaccinated.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

Innovation

- The need for homebound vaccinations was initially identified when City residents indicated they were homebound on vaccine registration forms and could not travel to receive a vaccine.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

 **BALTIMORE
CITY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Innovation

- While the AAA has in-home care services, in-home vaccinations were not yet available.
- As a division of the local health department, the AAA was closely involved in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to older adults and individuals with disabilities from the start of the vaccine rollout.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

 **BALTIMORE
CITY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Innovation

- The AAA began tackling this problem by identifying community partners able to provide vaccinations at home.
- As the program grew, the AAA tracked turnaround times to continually improve processes and expanded the scope of the program so that any city resident who requested an in-home vaccine was eligible.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

Innovation

- With the approval of boosters, the ADRC reached out to previously vaccinated patients for scheduling.
- The program has expanded further to provide at home testing kits to patients



Brandon M. Scott,
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

BALTIMORE
CITY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

Replicability

- For effective replication, organizations should leverage existing resources and partnerships in their community.
- Organizations or departments such as local EMS, health departments, hospitals, pharmacies, or in-home medical care agencies are needed to travel and administer vaccinations to constituents.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City



Replicability

- Additionally, ADRC staff require training for scheduling, answering questions regarding the COVID-19 virus, vaccinations, boosters, and complying to HIPPA standards when communicating with constituents.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

 **BALTIMORE
CITY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Replicability

- Organizations can use existing software (Microsoft Forms) to register constituents for appointments.
- These forms can be shared with the public to be completed independently by constituents or can be completed by trained ADRC staff at the request of a constituent.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

 **BALTIMORE
CITY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Replicability

- Secure data management is needed for scheduling, tracking vaccinations, communication with partners, managing sensitive information, and reporting.

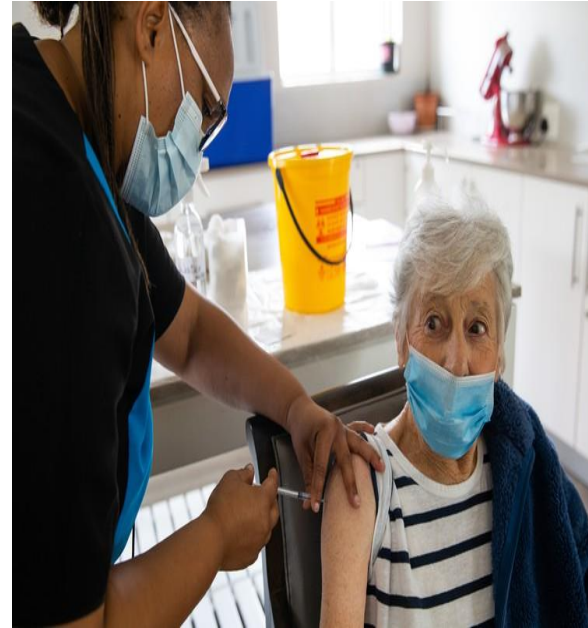


Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City



Outcomes/Impact

Throughout the course of this program so far, the AAA and partners have administered over 1,200 doses of COVID-19 vaccines to patients in their homes and made over 500 referrals to clinical partners who also administered COVID-19 vaccines in patients' homes.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

 **BALTIMORE
CITY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Brainstorming Activities



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

 **BALTIMORE
CITY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Brainstorming Activity

- What assets would help start and manage an in-home vaccination program?
- What community partners would you include?
- What blockers exist, from the client relationship side and the data management side?



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

 **BALTIMORE
CITY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Presenter/Participant Discussion

- Discuss common issues that have come up in the operations of the program.
- Participant perspective/alternative solutions.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

 **BALTIMORE
CITY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Group Activity

- Participants will work in groups to come up with a solution, with each group receiving a different scenario, in order to give participants an idea of challenges they might face in implementing a similar program.
- Each group will share their scenario, proposed solution, and thought process.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City



 **BALTIMORE
CITY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**



Chrystle D. Samuels
Director of Constituent Services
Chrystle.Samuels@baltimorecity.gov



Brandon M. Scott,
Mayor, Baltimore City
Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.
Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City

@Bmore_Healthy 
BaltimoreHealth 
health.baltimorecity.gov