A new federal pharmacy partnership with Rite Aid and CVS is bringing additional vaccines to New Jersey communities.

Under the partnership, both pharmacies have begun receiving direct shipments of over 27,000 vaccine doses available by appointment for those currently eligible in New Jersey at 102 stores.

CVS received 19,900 doses and Rite Aid 7,500 doses through a direct allocation from the federal government without tapping into the state’s supply.

Visit CVS.com for location/appointment information; for Rite Aid, visit riteaid.com/pharmacy/covid-qualifier. The pharmacies join a statewide network of megasites and community-based vaccination sites.

As of Monday, the state has now administered over 1 million COVID vaccination doses. As of Friday, 1,244,224 total vaccinations have been administered, including 933,160 first doses. The state is also expecting increasing quantities in the weeks ahead of vaccines from the federal government for the six megasites and other vaccination centers.

Previously, NJDOH partnered with Rite Aid to provide COVID-19 vaccinations to home care and hospice staff. A current federal pharmacy partnership with CVS and Walgreens is vaccinating residents and staff of long-term care facilities.

**CDC: Percent of Delivered First Vaccine Doses Administered by U.S. States and Territories**

Virtual Town Hall Addresses Vaccine Concerns Expressed By Communities of Color

A virtual town hall led by New Jersey medical professionals to address facts, fears and myths about COVID-19 vaccines for Black and Caribbean communities debuted Thursday evening and drew hundreds of live viewers.

The discussion was moderated by Dr. Kemi Alli, CEO, Henry J. Austin Health Center in Trenton, and featured: Dr. Chris T. Pernell, Chief Strategic Integration and Health Equity Officer at University Hospital in Newark; Dr. Amesika Nyaku, Infectious Disease, Rutgers Health in Newark; and Dr. Harold LaRoche, an Emergency Room staff physician with JFK Medical in Edison and Chapter President of Haitian Physicians Abroad.

Questions focused on issues such as vaccine safety, hesitancy, the role of primary doctors in addressing mistrust, and the vaccine and fertility. The town hall can be viewed at https://youtu.be/D4Us6H4WbCI.

A second town hall on Feb. 15 will provide information targeted to Latinx communities. The meeting will be in English, and a Spanish language version is set for later this month.

This discussion will be led by Amanda Medina-Forrester, Executive Director of NJDOH's Office of Minority and Multicultural Health, and will feature: Dr. Marcella Perez, board-certified family medicine physician at Zufall Health Center, Morristown; Gina Miranda-Diaz, an ANCC board-certified advanced public health nurse; and Luis Espina, MD, a board-certified family practice provider with RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group.

To register, visit: https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/565691448483659789.

Governor Murphy, N.J. Rep. Tom Malinowski, Commissioner Persichilli and others watch as Kimberly Foreman, RN, Director of Quality and Patient Services, vaccinates nurse Christine Cook at the Matheny Medical and Educational Center in Peapack-Gladstone on Tuesday.

(Food photo/Chris Pedota/NorthJersey.com/USA Today Network)

Frequently Asked Questions:

Are the two different vaccines interchangeable?
The COVID-19 vaccines are not interchangeable with each other or with other COVID-19 vaccine products. The safety and efficacy of a mixed product series has not been evaluated. Both doses of the series should be completed with the same product.

If I get vaccinated, do I still need to wear a mask or face covering?
Yes, you will still need to wear a mask and follow all safeguarding methods until enough individuals are vaccinated to produce community protection. We know that the vaccine keeps you from getting sick, but we don't know yet if the vaccine prevents a person from contracting the virus and then spreading it.

Sign up for Vax Matters