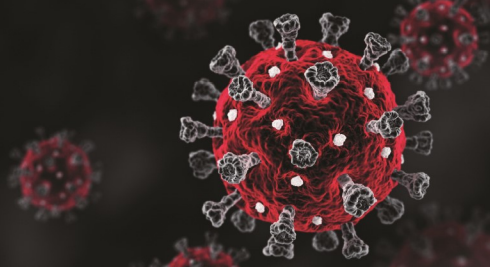


Vax Matters



February 19, 2021



News

Commissioner's Stakeholder Outreach Tops 10,000

As part of the state's outreach efforts to stakeholders and other community leaders to build public confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine and vaccination process, New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) Commissioner Judith Persichilli has now engaged with over 10,030 individuals representing 105 groups.

Groups have included education leaders, interfaith-based organizations, aging and senior services, pharmacies, elected officials, disabilities advocates, immigrant advocates, labor unions, healthcare associations, counties and local health departments, essential employee leaders, law enforcement and first responders.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the Strategic Communications Workgroup lead, Maria Del Cid-Kosso, 609-376-0989, NJDOH Director of Policy and Legislative Services.

COVID Alert NJ App Update Unveiled

An updated version of the COVID Alert NJ App is now available. The app, which protects privacy and data, has been a vital tool in bolstering the state's contact tracing efforts and helping to stop the spread.

The app is now available in 10 new languages and is interoperable with other states.

To date, over 583,000 individuals have downloaded the app – nearly 11% of the state's targeted population (over age 18).

For more information and to download the app, visit: covid19.nj.gov/app.

N.J. Community-Based Vaccination Partnership Launches

A new community-based vaccination partnership launched this week to provide equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccine to underserved communities throughout the state.

The program, which will vaccinate 15,000 through March, began Monday at the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens in Somerset.

The initial phase includes sites in **Somerset, Trenton, Elizabeth, Vineland and Paterson.**

These cities were strategically selected as they have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and are among the most diverse and socio-economically challenged communities in the state.

Each site will vaccinate approximately 1,500 people per week over a two-week period, followed by a return to administer second doses.

The sites are supported through a partnership of NJDOH, N.J. Office of Emergency Management, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and U.S. Department of Defense, in addition to local faith leaders, nonprofit organizations, local officials and health departments.

"Communities of color have been disproportionately impacted by this virus, and with our interfaith and other community-based partners, we are working to increase access and availability of the vaccine to vulnerable communities," said **Health Commissioner Persichilli.**

"We are ready for this. We've had educational webinars for our members for the past month," said **Reverend Dr. DeForest B. Soaries, Jr.,** Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens. "Overwhelmingly, African American and Hispanic members of our church and community are ready to take this vaccine."

To ensure equitable access, the sites will operate as closed points of distribution for members of the immediate community only.

Appointments will be required and handled directly through partnering houses of worship, community organizations, and community leaders. Each site will coordinate with a health partner; vaccine is dispensed from the State's allocation.



Army Spc. Cody Taylor, Urban Augmentation Medical Task Force -531, Fort Campbell, Ky., administers a vaccine at the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens. (U.S. Navy photo /Chief Mass Communication Specialist Barry Riley)

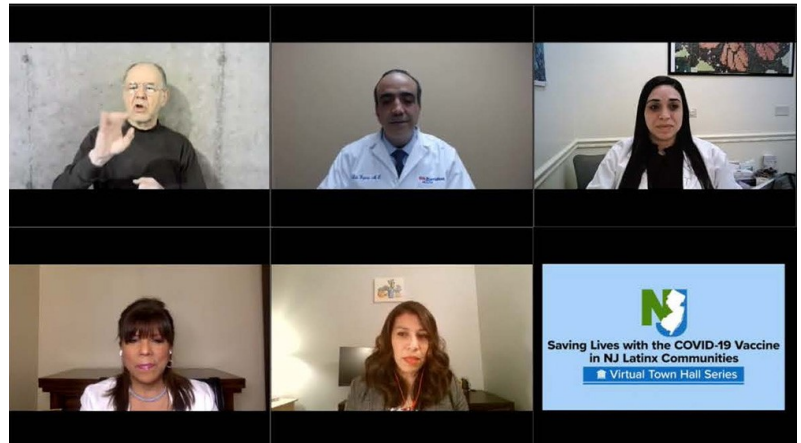
By the Numbers

- ◆ 1.5 million+ total doses administered in New Jersey
- ◆ 221,000+ total doses administered at megasites
- ◆ 190,000+ long-term care total doses administered
- ◆ 176,000+ callers who spoke to call center agents
- ◆ 10,000+ stakeholders reached in Commissioner's education campaign.
- ◆ 800+ doses administered so far at First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens

Virtual Town Hall Targets COVID-19 Vaccine Concerns Among Latinx Community

An NJDOH virtual town hall to help address facts, fears and myths for Latinx communities was held February 15, with a Spanish-language town hall planned for February 26.

The discussion was moderated by Amanda Medina-Forrester, Executive Director of NJDOH's Office of Minority and Multicultural Health, and included: 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.



Questions focused on issues such as how to encourage the Latinx community to get the vaccine; vaccine interactions with other medications; vaccine side effects; when children will be vaccinated; and what community leaders can do to help encourage vaccination. The town hall can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/FR2xdrBtNhw>

Spanish-Language Virtual Town Hall

The Feb. 26 Spanish-language town hall will be moderated by Sarah B. Bonilla, Director of the Center of Excellence

for Latino Health at RWJBH Clara Maass Medical Center. Guests will include: Dr. Marcella Perez, board-certified family medicine physician at Zufall Health Center, Morristown; Evelyn Javier, a board-certified nurse practitioner; and Dr. Rodolfo Munera, infection disease specialist and Medical Director, Broadway House for Continuing Care, Newark.

Registration is required: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8892350180647032847>.



Dr. Bresnitz Discusses Vaccine Safety in New NJDOH Video Podcast

Dr. Eddy Bresnitz, NJDOH Medical Advisor and Chair of the Health Department's Professional Advisory Committee, discusses the safety and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine in the latest *Saving Lives in New Jersey: The COVID-19 Vaccine and You* video podcast.

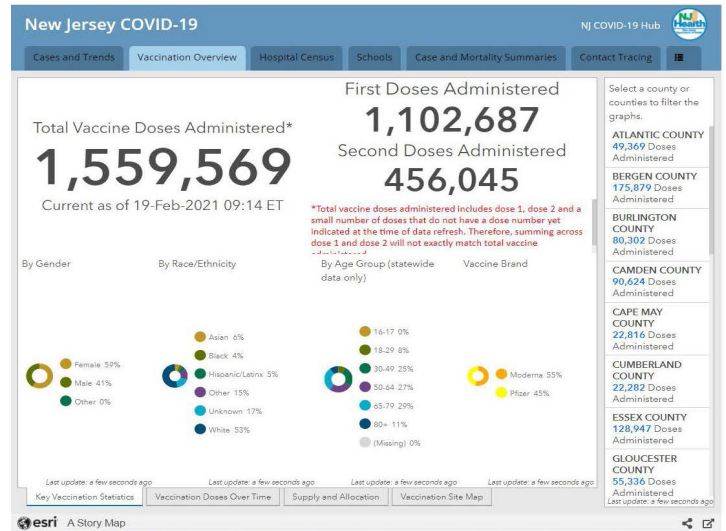
The podcast series is hosted by Dr. Meg Fisher, a pediatric infectious disease consultant and special advisor to Health Commissioner Persichilli.

The conversation includes steps that vaccines go through to be authorized for emergency use; post-vaccine safety

monitoring and the importance of wearing a mask and social distancing post-vaccine. [Click here](#) to watch.

The podcast's first installment featured a discussion on the importance of vaccination and hesitancy among workers in long-term care settings with Lisa Williams, Executive Director, Maplewood Senior Living at Princeton, and Chair of the Assisted Living Council, Health Care Association of New Jersey.

The podcast series will be posted on social media and the [NJDOH YouTube channel](#).



Resources

[COVID-19 Information Hub Vaccine Page](#)

[Community-Based Vaccination Sites](#)

[NJDOH COVID-19 Vaccination Page](#)

[New Jersey COVID-19 Vaccination Plan](#)

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