



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Hawai'i Hospitals prepare for arrival of COVID-19 vaccine

Healthcare community is working together to ensure coordination; The Queen's Medical Center takes part in drill on receiving Pfizer vaccine

HONOLULU - Hawai'i's hospitals and healthcare systems, in close coordination with the Hawai'i Department of Health, are gearing up to ensure that they are prepared for the arrival and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.

"My colleagues across the state have put their lives on the line in order to care for Hawai'i's COVID-19 patients," said Kelley Withy, MD, MS, PhD, Director, Hawaii/Pacific Basin Area Health Education Education Center. "As a clinical trial participant, I feel confident in the vaccine safety protocols. They've given this vaccine to 43,000 people and nobody has had a serious side effect, only mild headaches and fatigue. I believe the Emergency Use Authorization of COVID-19 vaccines will be a huge step forward in preventing further infection, saving the lives of those most vulnerable to the virus and protecting our healthcare workers."

Dr. Withy received the COVID-19 vaccine as part of the extensive clinical trials that both pharmaceutical companies that are applying for U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Emergency Use Authorization, Pfizer and Moderna, are conducting. She is also a member of the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA) Emergency Support Function 8.

This week, the Queen's Medical Center coordinated acceptance of a mock shipment of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. This shipping drill will allow Queen's staff to prepare pharmacy and medical staff for acceptance and storage of the vaccine, upon FDA Emergency Use Authorization (EUA).

The shipping drill included a thermal container, which is how the vaccine will be shipped upon EUA approval. Further drills are expected in the coming days.

[Click here to download photos and broadcast-quality b-roll of the Pfizer vaccine shipping drill](#)

PHOTO/VIDEO CREDIT: The Queen's Health Systems

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) will meet to review the safety and efficacy data package for Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine on Thursday, Dec. 10. Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine is scheduled to be reviewed by the committee on Thursday, Dec. 17.

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