Vaccinating Employees Against COVID-19

Stringent storage requirements, a limited timeframe for distribution, and strict prioritization criteria from federal and state authorities meant it would be challenging to mobilize 30,000+ VUMC employees to receive their COVID-19 vaccines. Moreover, the effort could not detract from a stable, sufficient workforce and VUMC's dedication to patient care.

CHALLENGE

VUMC needed to quickly vaccinate as much of its workforce as possible, while following federal-and state-provided distribution criteria and maintaining staffing levels to continue to deliver patient care

SOLUTION

Develop a specialized tool which leveraged employee-provided data, back-end logic from HR systems, and pharmacy and operational information to allow managers to schedule employees for available vaccination slots

OUTCOMES

Maximized use of available vaccine supply earmarked for VUMC employees, maintained staffing levels, and ensured vaccinated employees could perform essential responsibilities without fear of serious illness or death

> *"HealthIT's ability to incorporate so many data sources with such agility to swiftly create a flexible and user-friendly scheduling tool was invaluable to our ability to vaccinate our VUMC workforce in a smooth and efficient manner."*
> —Lori Rolando, MD, MPH, FACOEM

Emergency FDA authorization of new COVID-19 vaccines meant VUMC needed to quickly determine how to vaccinate thousands of employees as rapidly as possible. Complicating the effort were two factors: 1) keeping staffing levels stable for patient care and 2) complying with guidance to follow prioritization criteria for vaccine order. HealthIT immediately went to work developing a scheduling tool that would meet the challenge, launching its initial version just one week from first being tasked with its creation.

With guidance from Occupational Health, HealthIT's scheduling tool relied on several important data elements:

- Back-end logic from HR systems, including COVID-19 exposure related to patient care responsibilities
- Prioritization criteria to classify eligibility order for employees to receive vaccines
- Confidential employee-provided data
- Pharmacy system Information on available and anticipated vaccine supply (including shelf life of vaccines once pulled from deep freezers)
- Anticipation of space requirements to maintain social distancing
- Visibility into upcoming schedules through staff scheduling systems

The scheduling tool presented managers with clearly prioritized lists of employees, along with open slots for vaccinations, that allowed them to select dates and times that would maintain stable staffing levels throughout the Medical Center. Managers could accommodate both vaccine appointment times, as well as any potential absences resulting from vaccine side effects.

Ongoing work to the scheduling tools supported the distribution of future COVID-19 vaccines. HealthIT teams also responded rapidly to iterative requests for updates to scheduling requirements, check-in processes, and reporting and analytics needs.

The work of HealthIT resulted in key outcomes, including:

- Vaccinated employees could perform essential responsibilities without fear of serious illness or death
- Enabled vaccinations of approximately 1,200 employees per day
- Maintained staffing levels for patient care and stable Medical Center operations
- Maximized use of available vaccine supply earmarked for VUMC employees
- Provided "test run" for patient/ mass vaccinations

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