

January 7: Vaccine Distribution and Education, and NM Collaborates With CDPH to Launch New Contact Tracing Program

Today's issue features an update on vaccine distribution, the "Why I Got Vaccinated" campaign, and valuable resources to help educate colleagues and patients about COVID-19 vaccination. It also includes information about the newly launched Northwestern Medicine Contact Tracing Program, developed in collaboration with Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH).

VACCINE DISTRIBUTION AND EDUCATION

As COVID-19 vaccination continues across the health system, NM physicians and employees are encouraged to take advantage of the privilege of being offered the vaccine early. For those who have not done so, now is the time to indicate whether you wish to receive the vaccine by completing the opt-in/opt-out form via the NM Workforce app or online at nmsymptomcheck.nm.org.

Those who have already received the vaccine can help educate their colleagues by sharing their stories via social media as part of the **"Why I Got Vaccinated"** campaign. "Selfie stations" are set up at vaccination sites across the health system to make it easy for you to share your picture and tell your story on social media. Post your photos with the hashtags #NMBetter and #NMConsent to be featured.

Sharing experiences with colleagues can assist others as they navigate the decision to get vaccinated. Additional methods for education include:

- Participate in the **"Why I Got Vaccinated"** campaign.
- Debunk myths about the COVID-19 vaccine when you hear or read them.
- Share this recent **HealthBeat article** to help explain the vaccine.
- Encourage colleagues to go to nm.org/covid-19 for more information and resources.
- Check out the "Doses of Truth" segments on the **Why I Got Vaccinated** page.

If you remain unsure about vaccination, several educational sources are available in the COVID-19 Resources sections on the **Vaccine and Treatment Resources page on Physician Forum** and the **Vaccine and Treatment Resources page on NM Interactive** (login required), including answers to frequently asked questions, vaccine enrollment information and more.

NM COLLABORATES WITH CDPH ON CONTACT TRACING PROGRAM

In collaboration with the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), NM launched a new contact tracing program in December. As infection rates remain high and hospital volumes

increase, this partnership with the City of Chicago will provide a vital public health service by notifying individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19, and counseling them and their contacts to prevent further spread of the virus. The NM Contact Tracing Program also connects NM patients across diverse communities with access essential health services.

With medical guidance from Northwestern Memorial Hospital Infection Prevention Medical Director **Maureen Bolon, MD**, NM has established a team of contact tracers who will reach out to NM patients who are Chicago residents and have received a positive SARS-CoV-2 result, and will identify those who may have been exposed to the virus through the patient. The team is comprised of contact tracers, a dedicated social worker and a data coordinator.

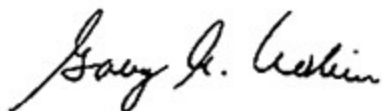
If exposed individuals would like to see an NM physician, a referral will be provided through the standard NM process. Contact tracing staff will be able to access a variety of resources for patients and their contacts to help them navigate health care and other social needs.

What physicians need to know

If you have a patient who is a Chicago resident and tests positive for SARS-CoV-2, the patient will likely be contacted by an NM contact tracer on behalf of the City of Chicago. This is part of a normal public health response to a pandemic. When you discuss positive test results with your patients, please make them aware of this process so they answer their phones for this important call.

For more information about the NM Contact Tracing program, please contact Katie Doyle at kathryn.doyle@nm.org or Beckie Frieders at rebecca.frieders@nm.org.

Thank you for your continued commitment to our *Patients First* mission, and for your enduring leadership and collaboration throughout the pandemic.



Gary A. Noskin, MD
Senior Vice President, Quality
Northwestern Memorial HealthCare
Chief Medical Officer
Northwestern Memorial Hospital