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Recommendations for COVID-19 Vaccine in Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Residents and Staff

Introduction

This statement provides recommendations for use of the 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccine in residents and staff of post-acute and long-term care (PALTC) facilities. Residents of PALTC settings are predominantly older than 65 and have multiple comorbidities, placing them at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19.^{1,2} Staff, both clinical and non-clinical, are also at heightened risk of exposure to COVID-19 in PALTC settings.³ While data on prevention of transmission is limited, vaccination may help reduce transmission between staff, residents, residents' visitors, as well as staff and their household contacts.⁴ Maintaining high vaccination coverage among staff also supports adequate staffing levels which is essential for resident safety and to ensure necessary care needs are being met.⁵

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective in protecting against serious outcomes from SARS-CoV-2 infection, including hospitalization, death, and the effects of Long COVID.^{3,6,7,8,9} Conversations about personal risks and benefits of vaccination for residents and staff are encouraged.

Recommendations

The Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medical Association (PALTmed) recommends routine vaccination of residents and staff without contraindications as described below:

- **All residents ≥ 18 years:**
Should receive **one dose** of the 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccine.
 - Moderna's "SPIKEVAX", Novavax's "NUVAXOVID", and Pfizer-BioNTech's "COMIRNATY", can be administered at least 2 months after any prior COVID-19 vaccine dose.
 - Moderna's "MNEXSPIKE" can be administered at least 3 months after any prior COVID-19 vaccine dose.
- **Residents with moderate to severe immunocompromise:**
Should receive **at least two doses** of the 2025–2026 COVID-19 vaccine.

- The preferred interval between doses is **6 months**, but they may be given as soon as **2 months apart** if needed (e.g., during an outbreak).
- **Additional doses** may be given **≥2 months** after the last dose based on shared clinical decision-making.
- **All staff:**
Clinical staff and nonclinical staff including vendors, contractors, and trainees in PALTC facilities should receive **one dose** of the 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccine.
 - Staff with moderate to severe immunocompromise may need additional doses.
- **Vaccine selection:**
Any COVID-19 vaccine licensed by the US Food and Drug Administration (Pfizer, Moderna, Novavax) for the appropriate age group may be used.

Implementation Considerations

- Providing **on site** vaccination for residents and staff is preferred.
- Facilities may partner with a community pharmacy, county or state health departments, as available, or other third-party vaccinators to ensure vaccine access for staff.
- Resources to support increasing immunization rates in PALTC facilities are available at <https://paltmed.org/products/guide-support-effective-immunization-practices-paltc>

The best protection against severe outcomes of COVID-19 is to receive the 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccine.

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