COVID-19 Response Efforts - January 19, 2021

The State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy is committed to protecting the health and safety of Ohioans during the COVID-19 outbreak. The Board posted a document on its website that provides COVID-19 guidance and response efforts, including the issuance of waivers to assist licensees in addressing operational needs. **Waivers can be found starting on page 5 of this document: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/COVID.**

For more information on the state's efforts to address coronavirus, visit www.coronavirus.ohio.gov or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH.

Board of Pharmacy Issues Updated Vaccine Guidance

In response to questions from the pharmacy community, the Board made the following updates to its pharmacist COVID-19 vaccine guidance document (www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/COVIDvaccine):

Q15) Can nurses and EMS certificate holders help administer a pharmacy's COVID-19 vaccine drug stock? UPDATE (1/19/2021)

Yes. Nurses and EMS certificate holders may be used to administer a pharmacy's COVID-19 vaccine stock. The pharmacy must have a physician authorized protocol that contains the following information pursuant to OAC 4729:5-3-12 (B):

1. Include a description of the intended recipients to whom the drugs are to be administered; drug name and strength; instructions of how to administer the drug, dosage, and frequency; signature of a prescriber or some other form of positive identification of the prescriber as defined in agency 4729 of the Administrative Code; and date of signature;
2. Be administered by an individual authorized by law to administer the drugs;
3. Be made readily retrievable (i.e. be able to be produced within 72 hours upon request);
4. Be reviewed as necessary to ensure patient safety and practice in accordance with acceptable and prevailing standards of care; and
5. Be maintained by the terminal distributor of dangerous drugs for a period of three years from the date of authorization or reauthorization following any modification or amendment.

Additionally, nurses and EMS personnel must also comply with the record keeping requirements specified in Q14 of this guidance.

EMS personnel must also comply with the requirements set forth by the Ohio EMS Board. The EMS Board also has additional vaccine training resources for EMS personnel on its website.

IMPORTANT: The pharmacy may update their existing pharmacist/intern protocol to include nurse and EMS certificate holders or may maintain a separate protocol.

Q16) Am I required to comply with Ohio's compounding standards when engaged in the dilution of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine? UPDATE (1/19/2021)

Unless otherwise stated by the FDA or CDC, pharmacies must adhere to the manufacturer's requirements for preparation and administration of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. Therefore, any conflict between Ohio's compounding standards and instructions from the federal government/manufacturer on vaccine preparation should defer to the federal government/manufacturer.

Additionally, the Board added the following FAQ to the pharmacy technician vaccine administration guidance (www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/TechAdmin):

Q11) Can registered pharmacy and certified pharmacy technicians prepare the COVID-19 vaccine for administration? UPDATE (1/19/2021)

Yes. Any state prohibitions on the preparation of the COVID-19 vaccine (such as who can perform sterile compounding) are pre-empted by the federal authorization. Therefore, registered and certified pharmacy technicians may assist with the preparation of FDA-authorized COVID-19

vaccines for administration.

Pharmacist to Intern Supervision Ratio Expanded for Immunization Administration

As a reminder, rule 4729:2-1-01 (O)(4) permits a pharmacist to supervise up to six interns engaged in the provision of immunizations.

Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer Registry

The Ohio Department of Health is seeking licensed healthcare professionals to enroll in the Medical Reserve Corps and help administer the COVID-19 vaccine in Ohio communities. Click here to learn how you can enroll today.