

WAFP Covid19 vaccine panel discussion

March 11th, 2021

Member Plus Family Health
Bainbridge Island



Blain Crandell MD

The community

- Population 25,000 -- skews older, 54% are age 45 and over, and median age is 48 yrs (Seattle has 34% and median age is 35 yrs)
- In the top 10 Washington ZIP codes for education level, and top 15 for average income
- Median home price \$730K (15th most expensive in WA)
- Bedroom community -- ferry system carries an average of 17,000 passengers per day between Bainbridge Island and Seattle.
- Part of Kitsap County, but historically identifies much more closely with Seattle (206 area code).
- Vast majority of service industry workers come from off-island, elsewhere in Kitsap County, as do a large percentage of the medical support workers (medical assistants, nurses, receptionists, etc).

How we've fared during the pandemic

- When pandemic started, many were able to switch to telecommuting. Economic impact was much less than average
- High rate of compliance with masks and social distancing
- Relatively low Covid incidence rate -- maximum 14-day average was 163 per 100K, and total cases since pandemic began is 267 (about 1% of the population)



The practice

- Concierge medical practice
- Located in mixed-use commercial and residential building in the downtown area
- Pre-pandemic staff: office manager, receptionist, 2 medical assistants, 1 nurse
- Reduced to office manager and 2 medical assistants after shutdowns began.
- Part-time receptionist was brought on in the fall as patient volumes picked up.

Our patients

- Total census ~700
- 52% are age 65+
- 12% are children
- 57% use Medicare
- 7% use Medicaid

Demographics are somewhat different than an average family practice panel

Laying the groundwork

- Participation in the state vaccines for children program prior to the pandemic was the key to getting approved early as a vaccine administration site.
- Team member who manages our vaccinations took action immediately when the first invitation to apply came from DOH.
- Made plans to ramp up staffing (we did this even before we knew we'd be approved as a site)
 - Asked former staff members to join
 - Put out feelers for volunteers
- Asked building manager to donate vacant office suite
 - Got HOA permission to potentially do a large-scale vaccination event
- Obtain supplies and furnishings (bought, begged, and borrowed, but not stolen).
- Create plan for movement of patients
 - Waiting area
 - Registration area
 - Vaccination areas
 - Post-vaccine monitoring area
- Began attending weekly vaccine provider coordination meetings with public health district
- Familiarized ourselves with:
 - Vaccine prep and administration guidance
 - State vaccine prioritization/allocation plan

I'm quite lucky to have such dedicated and proactive staff. They were "all in" on giving vaccines from the start. I couldn't have managed this without their help.

Getting down to work, first try

- Ideally, there is prior notice about when vaccine shipments will arrive.
 - We were approved but didn't know if or when we'd start getting vaccines.
 - We got our first shipment simultaneously with the notice from the Department of Health that it was coming.
- Our extra staff was quickly called in
- We reviewed the phase 1a guidance and started proactively calling to get eligible people scheduled
 - Focused on small scale providers -- physical therapists, counselors, chiropractors, dental providers, etc
 - Word of mouth spread quickly, and folks started to call us
- Kept the number of appointments small for our first day.
- Improvised and made changes on the fly
 - Phone script for inquiries
 - Email auto-replies
 - Voicemail system call routing changes
 - Used existing EMR system to schedule non-patients without needing to actually enter their information as patients
 - Created a generic "patient" named Non-member Covid Vaccine
 - Then scheduled that "patient" over and over, putting the actual patient's name in the appointment details
 - Protocol for timing a recipient's observation period
 - Protocol for finding recipients for the "bonus" doses



IMPORTANT REMINDER:
YOUR SECOND DOSE
APPOINTMENT IS THREE
WEEKS FROM TODAY, SAME
TIME AS YOUR APPOINTMENT
TODAY. NO EXCEPTIONS.

THANK YOU!

REGISTRATION CHECK

- YOU MUST HAVE AN APPOINTMENT
- HAVE READY:
 - 1 - PFIZER SCREENING FORM FILLED OUT COMPLETELY AND LEGIBLY
 - 2 - PHOTO ID
 - 3 - INSURANCE CARD (IF YOU HAVE ONE)

NO SMOKING

PLUS FAMILY HEALTH +
CLINIC
SUITE 17-A

A woman wearing a colorful patterned face mask and a white and blue striped long-sleeved shirt is sitting at a white folding table. She is looking at a clipboard with papers on it. On the table, there is a laptop, a printer, a water bottle, a hand sanitizer bottle, a wire basket containing more papers, and a large white container of Clorox disinfecting wipes. A trash can is visible under the table.

Three blue clipboards are stacked on the floor next to a wall outlet.



Continuing the work

- Kept in touch with other vaccine providers to coordinate and to exchange tips
- Realized that the demand was far exceeding supply
 - Staff was being overwhelmed with calls and emails
 - Removed our site from the listing on the DOH and health district websites
- Assessed, based on first day's experience, how many to schedule per day
- Then scheduled as many people as we had vaccine doses
- Placed our vaccine order for the following week
- Continued to fine tune our protocol
 - Second-dose appointments made automatically for recipients
 - Timing for getting vaccine doses thawed
 - Who to offer last-minute doses to
 - Purchased countdown timers to give to each recipient after their shot
- Increased our daily appointment volume in steps

The floodgates open

- Governor Inslee opens phase 1a to all persons 65 and over
- Phone and email inquiries became an avalanche
- We scheduled as many as we could, but demand was again far exceeding the supply
- Still not listed on the DOH and health district websites, but word of mouth continued to do what word of mouth does
- Weather-related vaccine shipment delays meant large numbers of appointments needed to be rescheduled
- By our fourth week (end of January), we felt pretty comfortable giving as many as 100 vaccinations per day.
- We continued to administer only Moderna vaccines through February

Taking the leap

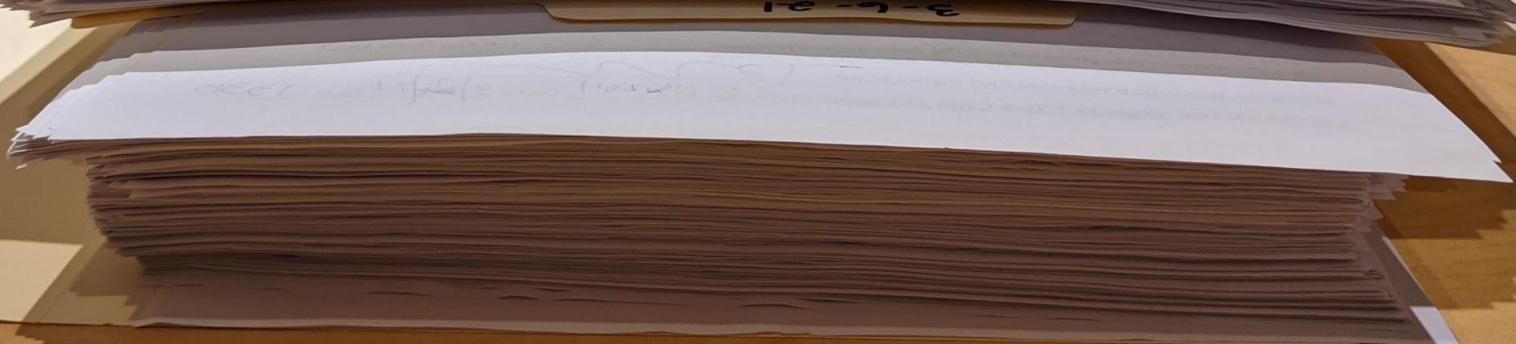
- Supplies of Moderna vaccines were running short, and we had gone two consecutive weeks without getting any vaccine for use as 1st doses
- After discussion, we decided we would request a shipment of Pfizer
 - Minimum quantity: 1170
 - Comes in its own cold storage container w/ dry ice (which you can replenish)
 - Allows over a week of time to use the vaccine
- When we were notified that we'd been approved we moved into action

Preparing for the big one

- **Scheduled volunteers and staff**
 - Assignments included crowd control, registration, vaccine prep, runner, vaccinators, data entry, setup/takedown crew, scheduler
- **Set up automated online patient-initiated scheduling**
 - Learned how to use the TimeTap web service
 - Went live with scheduling appointments
 - Made some mistakes, but nothing too problematic
 - Kept at it until it all worked
- **Prepared the facilities**
 - Markings on ground for spacing
 - Borrowed many folding chairs
 - Set up canopies for shelter, borrowed an outdoor heater
- **Verified adequate supplies**
- **Billing arrangements clarified**
- **Arranged food for staff and volunteers**
- **Rethought and made further changes to our protocol**
 - Use stickers with “time to leave” written on them instead of the countdown timers
 - Assign one staff member to be the exclusive vaccine preparer

Getting down to work, pro edition

- Morning huddle
- Patients began to arrive early
- We just got started
- Some things needed to be changed as we went
 - Appointment reminders needed to specify to patients NOT to arrive too early
 - Someone needed to be assigned to remind folks about distancing
 - Patients who thought they'd scheduled correctly did not, and we worked them in
 - Respond to weather conditions
 - Hang on to empty vaccine vials as a way to help verify counts
- Over 750 vaccines given during the course of three days



Closing thoughts

- We're locked in to doing another big three-day clinic for second doses in three weeks.
- The consensus among the volunteers and staff was that we wouldn't request another Pfizer shipment for first doses...at least for now.
- But we'll continue to request and administer Moderna and J&J vaccines, or volunteer to participate in vaccine clinics elsewhere
- It really was a big task for such a small group to use a full shipment of Pfizer vaccine. Larger groups might find it a easier to handle.
- All felt a huge sense of accomplishment, though, and the expressions of gratitude from vaccine recipients were quite moving at times.
- There were a few nice thank-you gifts that came, too.



Expect after getting a COVID-19 vaccine

