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Bay Area Community Health vaccinating thousands each week in Fremont, San Jose

Community health clinic ramping up vaccine efforts as supply increases

By **JOSEPH GEHA** | jgeha@bayareanewsgroup.com | Bay Area News Group
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Bay Area Community Health has announced it is ramping up the number of COVID-19 vaccines it administers each week as supply increases and is encouraging people who are eligible to sign up for an appointment.

The nonprofit healthcare center, which operates in Alameda and Santa Clara counties, has already inoculated more than 10,000 doses at its vaccination sites in San Jose and Fremont. It currently is receiving a total of about 3,000 doses each week, according to Daniel Winokur, the center's associate CFO.

"We've had six or seven straight weeks of scaling up" the number of doses administered based on available supply, Winokur said in an interview Monday.

"We want to vaccinate everyone in the community and we want to place special emphasis and special priority on the vulnerable groups that are hardest to reach," Winokur said.

Those include people who are poor, don't speak English, don't live in a home or have limited access to information through the internet or cell phones, Winokur said.

"All those people can get COVID too. And (the center) has worked really hard to have deep relationships with those folks where we're really trusted," he added.

In addition, the center also is administering doses to anyone at least 65 years old.

"It's a public health crisis that affects the entire community. We have some breadth…and we feel we have a responsibility to add ourselves to the list of the other big folks like the Kaisers, the Sutters and the Stanfords, to stand up another vaccination point," he said.

Appointments for a vaccine dose can be made through the health center's website, bach.health/vaccine, based on availability in either Fremont or San Jose.

Appointments can also be scheduled by calling 510-770-8040 for the Fremont site or 408-729-9700 for the San Jose site. For much of the pandemic, Bay Area Community Health has also been offering COVID-19 testing at rotating sites around the East Bay and South Bay.

The organization also provides health care services year-round to all people, even if they don't have health insurance and regardless of immigration status.

Bay Area Community Health was created in 2020 through the merger of the former Foothill Community Health Center and the former Tri-City Health Center.

Winokur said the center has "for many years been the best kept secret" in health care, though it currently serves almost 100,000 people.

"Everybody needs access to healthcare," Winokur said, "and right now that means a vaccine, so let's all step in there and do it."

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