

August 12, 2021

Rochelle Walensky, MD, PhD  
Director  
U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Dr. Walensky:

We are writing on behalf of the 34 million Americans living with diabetes to respectfully request consideration as your agency develops guidance on prioritizing certain populations for booster doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. Specifically, we urge your agency to consider the disproportionately negative health impact and outcomes COVID-19 has on people with diabetes and, as a result, release guidance prioritizing those with the disease to receive protection provided by booster doses of the vaccine.

Thus far, we understand that the agency has focused its attention on immunocompromised populations for additional doses of the vaccine. This approach correctly identifies those individuals who are more susceptible to contracting COVID-19; however, it may neglect a wide population of patients who suffer disproportionately poor outcomes after contracting COVID-19, including those Americans living with diabetes and/or cardiovascular disease, many of whom also have obesity.

As you know, people with diabetes suffer some of the worst health consequences from the COVID-19 virus, including:

- [Forty percent](#) of COVID-19-related fatalities in America have been in people with diabetes;
- Americans with diabetes and other related underlying health conditions are hospitalized [6 times more often](#) and are 12 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than those without an underlying condition;
- Other than cardiovascular disease, diabetes is the [most commonly reported underlying health condition](#) among U.S. COVID patients; and
- [Ten percent](#) of people with diabetes die within seven days of a COVID-related hospitalization.

Because of these circumstances – and the disproportionately poor health outcomes from COVID-19 in people with diabetes – we respectfully request the guidance promulgated by your agency include consideration for people with diabetes. Specifically, our hope is that you will include people with diabetes in your recommendations for those Americans who are eligible for booster vaccine doses.

Again, on behalf of the 34 million Americans living with diabetes, we appreciate your consideration of these comments and we look forward to working with you and your agency to help inform your guidance. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Chris Fox, Senior Vice President, External Affairs at [cfox@diabetes.org](mailto:cfox@diabetes.org).

Sincerely,

Robert Gabbay, MD, PhD, FACP  
Chief Science and Medical Officer  
American Diabetes Association

Leslie E. Kolb, RN, BSN, MBA  
Chief Science, Practice and Learning Officer  
Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists

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Jeff Hitchcock  
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Christina Roth  
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College Diabetes Network

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Sharon Oberfield, MD  
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Jim Carroll  
Chief Executive Officer  
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Katie Adamson  
Vice President, Health Partnerships and Policy  
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CC: Dr. Grace Lee, Chair, CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)  
Dr. Amanda Cohn, Executive Secretary CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices  
(ACIP)