

Vaccine appointments canceled amid confusion over supply

January 26 2021, by Jonathan Drew



In this Jan. 21, 2021, file photo, a man who came to get a COVID-19 vaccine holds his paperwork as he talks to a New York City health department worker outside a closed vaccine hub in the Brooklyn borough of New York. An increasing number of COVID-19 vaccination sites around the U.S. are canceling appointments because of vaccine shortages in a rollout so rife with confusion and unexplained bottlenecks. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens, File)

An increasing number of COVID-19 vaccination sites around the U.S. are canceling appointments because of vaccine shortages in a rollout so rife with confusion that even the new CDC director admitted she doesn't know exactly how many shots are in the pipeline.

States were expected to find out their latest weekly allocation of vaccines on Tuesday amid complaints from governors and top health officials about inadequate supplies and the need for earlier and more reliable estimates of how much is on the way so that they can plan accordingly.

President Joe Biden suggested Monday that he hopes the country can soon ramp up to 1.5 million shots dispensed per day. His administration has also promised more openness and said it will hold news briefings three times a week about the outbreak that has killed over 420,000 Americans.

But for now, the setup inherited from the Trump administration has been marked by frustration, miscommunication and unexplained bottlenecks, with shortages reported in some places even as [vaccine doses](#) remain on the shelf.

Dr. Rochelle Walensky, Biden's brand-new director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, was herself flummoxed over the weekend in trying to describe current supplies.

"I can't tell you how much vaccine we have," she told "Fox News Sunday," describing the problem as a challenge left by the outgoing Trump administration. "And if I can't tell it to you, then I can't tell it to the governors, and I can't tell it to the state health officials. If they don't know how much vaccine they're getting, not just this week, but next week and the week after, they can't plan."



In this Jan. 21, 2021, file photo, people who had appointments to get COVID-19 vaccinations talk to New York City health care workers outside a closed vaccine hub in the Brooklyn borough of New York after they were told to come back in a week due to a shortage of vaccines. An increasing number of COVID-19 vaccination sites around the U.S. are canceling appointments because of vaccine shortages in a rollout so rife with confusion and unexplained bottlenecks. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)

On Monday, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said the state can't meet growing demand from residents partly because an increase in vaccine promised by the government hasn't happened.

"We are at the mercy of what the [federal government](#) sends us, and right

now we are able to go through it quicker than what we are receiving," he said.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki responded by saying that Florida has administered only about half of the vaccines it has been given.

As of Tuesday morning, the CDC reported that just over half of the 41 million doses distributed to states have been put in people's arms.

The reason more haven't been dispensed isn't entirely clear. Some state officials have complained of a lag between when they report their numbers to the government and when the figures are posted on the CDC website.



In this Jan. 21, 2021, file photo, a cyclist passes a closed vaccination center at the George Westinghouse High School in New York. An increasing number of COVID-19 vaccination sites around the U.S. are canceling appointments because of vaccine shortages in a rollout so rife with confusion and unexplained bottlenecks. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan, File)



In this Jan. 24, 2021, file photo, Dr. John Corman, the chief clinical officer for Virginia Mason Franciscan Health, holds a sign that reads "Need Vaccine" to signal workers to bring him more doses of the Pfizer vaccine for COVID-19 as he works at a one-day vaccination clinic set up in an Amazon.com facility in Seattle. An increasing number of COVID-19 vaccination sites around the U.S. are canceling appointments because of vaccine shortages in a rollout so rife with confusion and unexplained bottlenecks. (AP Photo/Ted S. Warren, File)



In this Jan. 24, 2021, file photo, people work near refrigerators used to store the Pfizer vaccine for COVID-19, as patients who have received the shot sit in an observation area during a one-day vaccination clinic set up in an Amazon.com facility in Seattle and operated by Virginia Mason Franciscan Health. An increasing number of COVID-19 vaccination sites around the U.S. are canceling appointments because of vaccine shortages in a rollout so rife with confusion and unexplained bottlenecks. (AP Photo/Ted S. Warren)



In this Jan. 13, 2021, file photo, Muriel Mandell, 99, leaves a New York State COVID-19 vaccination site at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center after receiving her first dose in New York. An increasing number of COVID-19 vaccination sites around the U.S. are canceling appointments because of vaccine shortages in a rollout so rife with confusion and unexplained bottlenecks. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer, File)



In this Jan. 23, 2021, file photo, registered Nurse Shyun Lin, left, administers Alda Maxis, 70, the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at a pop-up vaccination site in the William Reid Apartments in the Brooklyn borough of New York. An increasing number of COVID-19 vaccination sites around the U.S. are canceling appointments because of vaccine shortages in a rollout so rife with confusion and unexplained bottlenecks. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer, Pool, File)



In this Jan. 15, 2021, file photo, Dr. Yomaris Pena, Internal Medicine Physician with Somos Community Care at a COVID-19 extracts the last bit of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine out of a vial so as not to waste it at a vaccination site at the Corsi Houses in the East Harlem neighborhood of New York. An increasing number of COVID-19 vaccination sites around the U.S. are canceling appointments because of vaccine shortages in a rollout so rife with confusion and unexplained bottlenecks. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer, File)

And while some vaccination sites have canceled appointments for first-dose shots, many are believed to be holding large quantities of vaccine in reserve to make sure people who have already gotten their first shot receive the required second one on schedule, three to four weeks later.

Inova Health System, the largest health provider in Virginia's

Washington, D.C., suburbs, said it is canceling all first-dose appointments at its mass vaccination clinics beginning Thursday because of inadequate supplies. Those who have already received a first dose will have their appointments for a second dose honored, it said. Inova has administered more than 70,000 shots.

In North Carolina, Greensboro-based Cone Health announced it is canceling first-dose appointments for 10,000 people and moving them to a waiting list because of supply problems. Also, UNC Health said Monday that the 10,000 doses it will receive this week are less than half of what it expected.

North Carolina Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy Cohen said Monday that "challenges and shortages" will persist as long as the state is "getting such a small amount of [vaccine](#)."

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