



Barnes Veterinary Specialty Services

January 17, 2021

VIA EMAIL ONLY TO DHSSDMAC@dhs.wisconsin.gov

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Dr. Heidi Barnes Heller and I am from Madison, Wisconsin. I am a veterinarian and owner of a mobile veterinary neurology and neurosurgery practice that serves Wisconsin veterinarians, pets and owners. **I am writing to strongly encourage you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.** As a specialist, I am called by general practitioners located anywhere in the state of Wisconsin to evaluate a dog or cat with neurologic disease. I travel to the clinic or hospital, evaluate the pet and provide recommendations for care. Although I do, and will continue to, wear a mask, wear a shield, and remained distanced from other humans as much as possible while performing my duties, these are not failsafe measures. The simple act of entering a clinic and working with the staff at that clinic provides a risk of exposure to COVID-19 higher than if I worked from my home. I am one of 5 veterinary neurologists in the entire state, and the ONLY mobile neurologist. My services are used by owners that cannot travel to referral hospitals or those wishing to maintain veterinary care with their trusted local veterinarian. Loss of specialty veterinary services due to a risk of COVID exposure, or infection, would be devastating to the dogs and cats that need care by a neurologist and would cripple veterinarians that rely on my expertise and the expertise of other veterinary specialists. We are essential workers in the State of Wisconsin because of the important role that we play in the One Health idea.

Thank you for considering this request.

Heidi Barnes Heller, DVM, DACVIM (Neurology)
Owner, Barnes Veterinary Specialty Services, LLC
Madison, WI



Thursday, January 14th, 2021

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Heidi Kellihan and I am from Madison, Wisconsin. I am a veterinarian. I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

I am currently a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine. Within the UW Veterinary Care hospital, our department alone sees a minimum of 5-6 scheduled clients and their pets, our patients, per day, in addition to any emergent appointments in need of a Cardiologist (which are frequent). Our service also consults with/guides referring veterinarians all across the state of Wisconsin (as well as bordering states) regarding cardiac care and cardiac emergencies in veterinary patients. Within the hospital, our service is consulted multiple times [REDACTED], including those undergoing urgent or emergent surgical procedures. The demand for our services, from clients and referring veterinarians, is so great that we consistently book out 3-5 months in advance, despite overly filled days each week. If our service were to be shut down due to COVID outbreak, not only would we be at risk for exposing a large number of faculty/staff, clinicians, and students at the hospital, but our patients would suffer a higher morbidity and mortality as they are often in need of urgent or emergent care that cannot be provided remotely and often specifically requires skills possessed only by specialty-trained Cardiologists (of which there are very few in the state of Wisconsin).

Thank you for considering this request.

Heidi Kellihan DVM, DAVCIM (Cardiology)
UW Veterinary Care (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
2015 Linden Dr, Madison WI 53706
Phone: 608-263-7600 (Hospital)
Web: www.uwveterinarycare.wisc.edu

1/16/2021

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Jenni Mitchell and I am from Saukville, Wisconsin. I am a small animal veterinarian. I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Veterinarians and their staff members are essential in that they provide a valuable and necessary service to public health. We are critical in providing protection from zoonotic diseases such as rabies, leptospirosis, roundworms, and hookworms, we provide necessary services to ensure the welfare of animals that are commonly considered “family members”, and we play a crucial role in safeguarding the food supply. Many veterinary professionals practice out of small buildings or vehicles, making effective social distancing impossible, which means that a single infected team member could easily infect the entire staff, resulting in the need to close our doors and halt our services. Also, veterinarians are often respected as educated and trustworthy members of their communities, and by receiving the vaccine early in distribution phase, they could serve as role models in dispelling some of the fears and myths surrounding the vaccine.

Thank you for considering this request.

Jenni Mitchell, DVM
Thiensville-Mequon Small Animal Clinic

[REDACTED]

January 14, 2021

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Jennifer Gall and I am from Madison, Wisconsin. I am a Certified Veterinary Technician. I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

I work at the University of Wisconsin Veterinary Teaching Hospital in Madison, WI. I work specifically in the ER and Critical Care Unit. The hospital is very large and I work in an area of the hospital that is very busy and sees most departments it is hard for me to be isolated and still take care of my patients. When I work in the ER department, I have closed contact with the public. This is by clients bringing their pets in for emergency care and we as a hospital are continuing to do curb side appointments. [REDACTED] have also been numerous cases in other departments who frequent the area that I work in. Please consider all Veterinary Professionals to be included in the 1b phase of the vaccination plan.

Thank you for considering this request.

Jennifer Gall

[REDACTED]



Fellow Mortals, Inc.™

Wildlife Hospital

"...I'm truly sorry man's dominion has broken nature's social union, an' justifies that ill opinion which makes thee startle at me, thy poor, earth-born companion, an' fellow mortal..."

-Robert Burns, 1785

January 15, 2021

VIA EMAIL ONLY TO DHSSDMAC@dhs.wisconsin.gov

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: Wildlife rehabilitators - Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Jessica Massaro Nass. I am an advanced wildlife rehabilitator licensed by Wisconsin DNR, employed by Fellow Mortals Wildlife Hospital, Lake Geneva, WI. I have been a licensed wildlife rehabilitator since 2006.

Fellow Mortals has treated 60,000 animals brought to us by the public since its organization as a non-profit in 1985. In 2020, Fellow Mortals admitted 2000 animals from 123 communities across the state.

I am writing to ask you to include wildlife rehabilitation professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Wildlife rehabilitators are a small but important group of individuals who provide care for injured and orphaned wildlife brought into care by the public. Given the nature of this pandemic, research on transmissibility of this virus to animals has been limited to date. In the interest of preventing a potential reservoir of this virus in the wild I think it is imperative that this group of individuals be included for the benefit of the public, and the wild resources of the state.

Thank you for considering this request.

Jessica Massaro Nass
Fellow Mortals Wildlife Hospital, Lake Geneva, WI

January 14, 2021

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Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: **Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan**

Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Jonathan Bach and I am from Madison, Wisconsin. I am a veterinarian at UW-Madison School of Veterinary Medicine. I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

I am an emergency medicine veterinarian, I train a host of individuals (students, interns, residents, technicians) and primarily see emergent cases presenting to our practice. Our practice has remained open during COVID, but it has been a marked struggle. The demand for Emergency care has only increased during the pandemic. Access to our practice is very cumbersome and uses curbside patient triage, clients a [REDACTED] the phone with our clients (pet owner) who are oftentimes immensely concerned for their pet who they view as a member of their family.

Thank you for considering this request.

Jonathan Bach
Clinical Associate Professor
UW Veterinary Care
UW-Madison, School of Veterinary Medicine

[REDACTED]

Thursday, January 14, 2021

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Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: **Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan**

Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Julie Mueller and I am from Plymouth, Wisconsin. I am a Veterinary Technician. I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

I work at a small veterinary clinic in the Town of Fredonia. We have a client base that includes both large and small animals and they are traveling great distances to see us due to other clinics in the area being closed because of COVID outbreaks in their clinics. Our clinic is also dealing with short staffing and it is affecting our ability to serve all our clients appropriately. Please include veterinarian health care [REDACTED] [REDACTED] we can continue to serve our clients.

Thank you for considering this request.

Julie Mueller

[REDACTED]

1/15/2021

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Secretary--Designee Andrea Palm Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee

Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

Dear Secretary--Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Kaitlin Jones Barnes and I am from Madison, Wisconsin. I am a Veterinarian.

I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

As a veterinarian, I am classified by the State of Wisconsin as an Essential Employee. My veterinary colleagues and I provide lifesaving care that requires in person patient contact. If unable to perform our duties due to COVID-19 outbreak closures or illness-related staffing limitations, it is the animal family members that will suffer and die.

The impact may seem small compared to human lives, but if veterinarians are unable to perform their duties, our food supply is in jeopardy. Veterinarians are essential for maintaining health in the food supply which directly impacts human health. If not able to perform these functions due to COVID-19, it is all humans who will be severely impacted with possible result of a complete collapse of our food supply system.

As such, we are disappointed to see our veterinary professionals overlooked in this recommendation for the next phase of vaccine distribution. I strongly urge you to include Wisconsin veterinary works in Phase 1b.

Sincerely,



Kaitlin Jones Barnes, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine



Fellow MortalsTM, Inc.

Wildlife Hospital

“...I'm truly sorry man's dominion has broken nature's social union, an' justifies that ill opinion which makes thee startle at me,
thy poor, earth-born companion, an' fellow mortal...”
-Robert Burns, 1785

January 15, 2021

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Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: **Wildlife rehabilitators – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan**

Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Karen McKenzie and I am an advanced wildlife rehabilitator licensed by Wisconsin DNR, employed by Fellow Mortals Wildlife Hospital, Lake Geneva, WI. I have been a licensed wildlife rehabilitator since 2004.

Fellow Mortals has treated 60,000 animals brought to us by the public since its organization as a non-profit in 1985. In 2020, Fellow Mortals admitted 2000 animals from 123 communities across the state.

I am writing to ask you to include wildlife rehabilitation professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Wildlife rehabilitators are a small but important group of individuals who provide care for injured and orphaned wildlife brought into care by the public. Given the nature of this pandemic, research on transmissibility of this virus to animals has been limited to date. In the interest of preventing a potential reservoir of this virus in the wild I think it is imperative that this group of individuals be included for the benefit of the public, and the wild resources of the state.

Thank you for considering this request.

Karen McKenzie, MSc
Fellow Mortals Wildlife Hospital, Lake Geneva, WI

Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

January 14, 2021

TO DHSSDMAC@dhs.wisconsin.gov

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
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RE: **Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan**

Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Dr Karl Solverson and I am from LaCrosse, Wisconsin. I am a Veterinarian and I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

I have a large animal veterinary practice and my clients are primarily dairy and beef producers in rural parts of western Wisconsin. Many of my clients are older and some are also immunocompromised. Living in a city (LaCrosse) [REDACTED] e [REDACTED] would be spreading the disease to my clients or I would pick up the disease on a farm and bring it back to my family despite taking best precautions I can. I'm considered essential providing veterinary services to the dairy and beef industry and can't work from home to offer these services. Getting a Covid 19 vaccination is critical to help reduce my chance of contracting or spreading the disease in my community. I would explore you to reconsider and include veterinarians in the Phase 1b vaccination plan so we as veterinarians can feel safe and offer our clients extra safety precaution as well in preventing the spread of this terrible disease.

Thank you for considering this request.

Karl D Solverson, DVM
[REDACTED]

Thursday, January 14th, 2021

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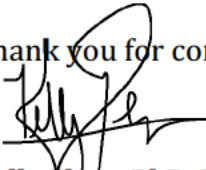
RE: Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Kelly Flynn and I am from Madison, Wisconsin. I am a veterinarian. I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

I am currently a training Cardiology resident at the University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine. Within the UW Veterinary Care hospital, our department alone sees a minimum of 5-6 scheduled clients and their pets, our patients, per day, in addition to any emergent appointments in need of a Cardiologist (which are frequent). Our service also consults with/guides referring veterinarians all across the state of Wisconsin (as well as bordering states) regarding cardiac care and cardiac emergencies in veterinary patients. Within the hospital, our service is consulted multiple times per day by other services regarding cardiac disease in their patients, including those undergoing urgent or emergent surgical procedures. The demand for our services, from clients and referring veterinarians, is so great that we consistently book out 3-5 months in advance, despite overly filled days each week. If our service were to be shut down due to COVID outbreak, not only would we be at risk for exposing a large number of faculty/staff, clinicians, and students at the hospital, but our patients would suffer a higher morbidity and mortality as they are often in need of urgent or emergent care that cannot be provided remotely and often specifically requires skills possessed only by specialty-trained Cardiologists (of which there are very few in the state of Wisconsin).

Thank you for considering this request.



Kelly Flynn PhD, DVM | Cardiology Resident
UW Veterinary Care (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
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January 15, 2021

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Kimberly Kratt. I am a veterinarian at Central Animal Hospital in Onalaska, Wisconsin. My husband, Douglas, and I are practice owners. I am writing to ask you to reconsider including veterinary health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

We are a three doctor, small animal veterinary practice. Although we are a relatively small staff of 15 individuals, our role in veterinary healthcare [REDACTED] f [REDACTED] less pet owners, often in close quarters when the owner is comforting their pet during the exam. We are also in close quarters during moments of grief and routine patient care, which requires veterinary team members to stand literally shoulder to shoulder and usually touching each other.

Central Animal Hospital is one of few veterinary practices inside of a two hour's drive that provides comprehensive emergency and surgical care. We routinely take in critical patients that will not survive the drive to a tertiary care center. Included in our patient population are many police K9 officers, including all Wisconsin State Patrol, Tomah, Campbell, Onalaska, Holmen, and La Crosse County police departments. I don't think many would question the vital role our police K9 officers play in keeping our communities safe.

A COVID positive case in our workplace, and even an imposed quarantine, would result in a [REDACTED] business operations for us. If this happened, hundreds of pets would not have access to comprehensive veterinary care. This would translate to a public health risk, both for pets lacking basic care, but most importantly, a rise in the risk of zoonotic disease, directly affecting human health.

I would be happy to answer any questions you have on this matter or be a resource for your needs going forward.

Thank you for consideration.

Kimberly Kratt, DVM

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

January 16, 2021

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Dr. Lindsay Tucker and I am from Madison, Wisconsin. I am a full time veterinarian at Companion Animal Hospital in Madison. I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Companion Animal Hospital is a small animal clinic serving the Madison area community for over 20 years. Our clinic operates with one full time veterinarian (myself) and a support staff of six other employees. As a full service s [REDACTED], dental care, and medical care to our clients and their pets. Throughout the pandemic, we have been committed to protecting our staff and clients by providing the same high quality care via curbside service. Due to the nature of our profession, a COVID outbreak among our small staff would be devastating to our small business as well as to our clients and their pets.

Therefore, I respectfully urge you to consider including Wisconsin veterinary professionals in Phase 1b COVID vaccination plans. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,
Lindsay Tucker, DVM

[REDACTED]

1/14/21

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

My name is Marjorie Koeppen and I am from Jefferson, Wisconsin. I am a veterinarian. I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

I am a veterinarian in a rural area. We have 7 veterinarians in our practice and we service both companion and food animals in our county. We also provide emergency after hours service for both small and large animals. Our clients count on us for routine and emergency veterinary care and would not be able to find local veterinary services if our clinic had to close due to a COVID-19 outbreak.

Thank you for considering this request.


Dr. Marjorie Koeppen, DVM




1/15/2021

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

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RE: Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee:

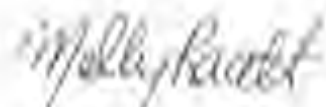
My name is Dr. Molly Racette and I am from Madison, Wisconsin. I am a faculty criticalist at the UW Madison School of Veterinary Medicine. I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

I work in the emergency and critical care department at UW Veterinary Care. Due to initial shut down, reduction in appointments when the COVID outbreak was first identified and increase in pet adoptions during quarantine there has been a marked increase in veterinary emergency visits. More pets being seen for more critical illnesses, likely due to initial delays in being able to get care. In addition, more pets are unable to see their primary veterinarians in a timely manner due to overwhelming of the system therefore these pets are being seen through emergency services.

Despite the increase in cases seen through emergency centers, there is a critical lack of staff to care for these pets. There is already a shortage of appropriate staffing and with continued quarantine/isolation due to COVID restrictions causing more staff to call out of shifts, pets are not able to get the care they need and veterinary professionals are showing burnout of previously unseen levels. Further COVID spread limits care available for pets and puts an already strained system further behind.

Veterinarians and veterinary staff have a critical need for vaccination to continue to be able to provide care to the influx of pets that need care. Delay in care is going to lead to loss of life, both of animals due to inability to get care but also human, due to increased burn out worsening the mental health crisis already seen in veterinary professionals.

Thank you for considering this request.



Molly Racette