

From: [Rebecca Sharrard](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine Subcommittee - Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 11:43:19 AM

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COVID-19 Vaccine Phase 1b

January 18th, 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 Rebecca Sharrard, CVT, and I am from Salem, 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.

Being a technician at Care Animal Hospital in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, we see a large number of patients in a day, and have a lot of contact with their owners throughout the patient's time in our clinic. We have been open and working since COVID-19 broke out, and have been able to keep our practice open by following the WI Department of Health's recommendations while in our practice. We are a general practice that serves our community with wellness, sick and surgery services on a 7-day basis, and can see up to 60 patients within a day. We have worked very hard to not have our clinic close due to COVID-19, and I would like to be able to provide myself with a way of protecting my clients and my co-workers by being able to be vaccinated to try and slow down this virus. Please consider the veterinary community and let us be able to get the vaccination.

Thank you for considering this request.

[REDACTED] CVT [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

From: [Dawn Phelan](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine Subcommittee - Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 11:35:20 AM

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

My name is Janeen Smith, DVM and I am from Verona, 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 an owner of a small animal practice with 6 veterinarians. Even though we have curbside only services for pet owners, their pets still enter the hospital and can be carrying COVID-19 virus.

We have had one small outbreak (3 employees), and this had a grave impact on our employees, clients, and patients.

Please consider my request.

Sincerely,

Janeen Smith, DVM

--

Dawn Phelan - office manager
Fitchburg Veterinary Hospital & Waggin' Tails Doggie Dude Ranch & Pet Lodge
6249 Nesbitt Rd
Madison, WI 53719
(608)271-4212

From: [Rebecca Banks](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 11:32:09 AM

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

My name is Rebecca Banks, and I am from Milwaukee, 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 work at a clinic in Shorewood, WI. We are currently shut down due exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 in the last week. This means that our more than 7000 patients do not have access to trusted veterinary care. We cannot provide preventive care and vaccinations, we cannot treat illnesses as they arise, we cannot perform surgical procedures and we cannot alleviate suffering with end of life care.

This is not a job that we can do remotely. In a time where the human-animal bond is more important than ever, we cannot hold up our medical oath to “protect animal health and welfare.”

Both our oath and our work also commits us to the promotion of public health and advancement of medical knowledge. Myself and my staff have been working with the public face-to-face without fail throughout the duration of this global pandemic. Vaccination of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, veterinary assistants and clinic support staff will allow us to continue our work.

Please consider the inclusion of veterinary health care professional in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Thank you for considering this request.

Rebecca Banks, DVM
Associate Veterinarian, Dr. Noah's Ark Veterinary Clinic, Shorewood, WI

From: [Kyle Schimek](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: vaccine subcommittee phase 1b
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 11:15:28 AM

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

My name is Dr. Kyle Schimek, PharmD and I am from Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. I am a pharmacist with a background in emergency medicine. I am writing to ask you to include veterinarians, veterinarian assistants, and veterinarian technicians in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Having worked in an emergency department for years, I have seen the toll and stress that healthcare providers endure to ensure optimal outcomes for vulnerable patients having an emergency. Late in 2020, my dog, a golden retriever, had a medical emergency—internal bleeding from what we later learned to be cancer. I was heart broken as I brought my sick dog to the veterinarian. The veterinarian and their staff worked quickly and professionally to help my dog, but also help me in my time of stress. It was then that I realized how much COVID has affected their lives as well. Social distancing is not possible when trying to restrain a dog for X-rays. Social distancing is not possible when trying to draw blood from a scared dog. These professionals put themselves at risk everyday to take care of our pets. Pets don't stop having medical emergencies because a pandemic is going on. Veterinarians and their staff have continued to step up and take care of our pets, many of us consider family, despite their own personal risk. Let's return the favor by including them in the next phase of vaccine distribution to help protect them from COVID as they provide healthcare to our pets.

Thank you for considering this request.

Thank you,

Kyle Schimek, PharmD

From: abreedapart@tds.net
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine Subcommittee - Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 11:15:01 AM

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

We are writing to ask you to include veterinary health care professionals in Phase 1B of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

At the beginning of this national crisis we restructured our practice to perform curbside appointments. We were able to maintain this system for a short while but the sheer number of patients seeking care made this impossible. Curbside appointments are more labor and time intensive. Even local emergency clinics had to make the decision to turn patients away due to lack of available resources. We made the decision over and over not to turn patients away, often prioritizing their needs over our own. Ultimately we had to make the anxiety-ridden decision to open our doors back up to clients in order to sustain our patient load. We cannot physically distance ourselves from our coworkers as we perform animal restraint for physical exams and surgical procedures. We continue to see the pets of COVID positive clients when they fall ill. Although uncommon, it is possible for dogs and cats to test positive for COVID-19 and there can be no distancing in their care.

We know we are not alone in facing these struggles – veterinary clinics across our state are burdened with these same decisions, and there is no back-up plan if our clinics need to close. Our clients and their pets would be hard-pressed to turn to a new clinic for help as so many are overbooked. People are finding themselves with more time and less social and emotional outlets and are therefore adopting more pets. It would be an egregious oversight not to prioritize vaccinating veterinary health professionals. We are the first and last defense of companion animals.

Thank you for considering this request.

A Breed Apart Animal Hospital
Karen Vanderloo, DVM
Melissa Crook, CVT
Katie Tschanz, CVT
Chris Evers, CVT
Julie Shrader, CVT

From: [Michelle Schimek](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 11:13:07 AM

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January 18, 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 Michelle Schimek and I am from Colgate, Wisconsin. My daughter-in-law is a veterinarian and this is what she has to say:

“My name is Meryl Schimek and I am from Wauwatosa, 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 work at a clinic in Shorewood, WI. We are currently shut down due exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 in the last week. This means that our more than 7000 patients do not have access to trusted veterinary care. We cannot provide preventive care and vaccinations, we cannot treat illnesses as they arise, we cannot perform surgical procedures and we cannot alleviate suffering with end of life care.

This is not a job that we can do remotely. In a time where the human-animal bond is more important than ever, we cannot hold up our medical oath to “protect animal health and welfare.”

Both our oath and our work also commits us to the promotion of public health and advancement of medical knowledge. Myself and my staff have been

[REDACTED] public face-to-face without fail throughout the duration of
[REDACTED] Vaccination of veterinarians, veterinary technicians,
assistants and cli [REDACTED] a [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Please consider the inclusion of veterinary health care professional in Phase 1b
of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Thank you for considering this request.

Michelle Schimek [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Justin Desmarais](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine Subcommittee - Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 11:10:41 AM

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Dear State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee,

I am writing today to implore you to include Veterinary Care workers as part of Phase 1B to receive COVID-19 Vaccination.

Veterinary Care workers are essential workers. They care not only for pets, which have innumerable benefits to mental health and family health, but also livestock and service animals. They are on the frontlines of discovering and tracking zoonotic diseases, such as COVID-19, to help maintain public health and prevent future epidemics and pandemics.

Most veterinary clinics and animal hospitals have been open for the duration of the pandemic. They interact with clients and pets every day and put themselves at great risk to ensure that their community's animals (and their owners) are cared for and they're livelihoods maintained. Vaccination would go a long way to make sure that these facilities continue to stay open and available to their patrons and that the staff of each are kept safe while doing so.

Best Regards,

Justin R. Desmarais

From: [Tanya Schimek](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine subcommittee phase 1b
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 11:06:31 AM

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January 18th, 2021

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

My name is Tanya Compton and I am from Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. My [REDACTED] is 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.

She works at a clinic in Shorewood, WI. They are currently shut down due exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 in the last week. This means that our more than 7000 patients do not have access to trusted veterinary care. They cannot provide preventive care and vaccinations, they cannot treat illnesses as they arise, they cannot perform surgical procedures and they cannot alleviate suffering with end of life care.

Additionally, as a family member to someone who was exposed, I have had to help my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] by getting them groceries and prescriptions on multiple occasions as she has been quarantined multiple times due to exposures at work.

Her job is not a job that can be done remotely. In a time where the human-animal bond is more important than ever, they cannot hold up our medical oath to “protect animal health and welfare.”

Both their oath and their work also commits them to the promotion of public health and advancement of medical knowledge. Her and her staff have been working with the public face-to-face without fail throughout the duration of this global pandemic. Vaccination of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, veterinary assistants and clinic support staff will allow them to continue their work.

Please consider the inclusion of veterinary health care professional in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Thank you for considering this request.

Tanya Compton

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Schimek, Dr. John](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine subcommittee, Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 11:06:02 AM

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January 18, 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 John Schimek and I am from Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. I am a Pediatrician working in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and my [REDACTED] is a Veterinarian working in Shorewood, Wisconsin. I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Their veterinarian clinic is currently shut down due exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 in the last week. This means that more than 7000 patients do not have access to trusted veterinary care. They cannot provide preventive care and vaccinations, cannot treat illnesses as they arise, cannot perform surgical procedures and cannot alleviate suffering with end of life care.

This is not a job that they can do remotely. In a time where the human-animal bond is more important than ever, they cannot hold up our medical oath to “protect animal health and welfare.”

She and her staff have been working with the public face-to-face without fail throughout the duration of this global pandemic. Vaccination of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, veterinary assistants and clinic support staff will allow them to continue our work.

[REDACTED] ion of veterinary health care professional in Phase 1b of the
[REDACTED] 2019 vaccination p [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] for considering this request.

John Schimek, MD

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[REDACTED]

From: [Meryl Schimek](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Veterinarians – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 11:05:44 AM

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

My name is Meryl Schimek and I am from Wauwatosa, 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 work at a clinic in Shorewood, WI. We are currently shut down due exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 in the last week. This means that our more than 7000 patients do not have access to trusted veterinary care. We cannot provide preventive care and vaccinations, we cannot treat illnesses as they arise, we cannot perform surgical procedures and we cannot alleviate suffering with end of life care.

This is not a job that we can do remotely. In a time where the human-animal bond is more important than ever, we cannot hold up our medical oath to “protect animal health and welfare.”

Both our oath and our work also commits us to the promotion of public health and advancement of medical knowledge. Myself and my staff have been working with the public face-to-face without fail throughout the duration of this global pandemic. Vaccination of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, veterinary assistants and clinic support staff will allow us to continue our work.

Please consider the inclusion of veterinary health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Thank you for considering this request.

Meryl Schimek, DVM
Associate Veterinarian, Dr. Noah’s Ark Veterinary Clinic, Shorewood, WI

From: [Julia B. Smith](#)
To: [Vaccine Subcommittee](#)
Subject: [Vaccine Subcommittee](#)
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021, 11:02:46 AM

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1/17/2021

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 Lauren Keith and I am from Madison, Wisconsin. I am a veterinarian. I am writing to ask you to include veterinary health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

I worked as an emergency veterinarian in one of the three veterinary specialty practices in Madison, Wisconsin for the majority of the pandemic to date. During the pandemic, for the first time in my career, I experienced a time where our emergency room was overrun due to general practices shutting down and having limited hours and staffing due to the pandemic. For the first time in my career, I had to turn patients away that were in need because there were just too many animals and we did not have the staff to care for them all. I sent families with critically ill pets to other emergency centers in the area where they were turned away as well. Animals have suffered and died because of this, and they will continue to do so unnecessarily unless we are able to protect those who care for them.

Before I go further, I want to make sure you understand a veterinarian's role in your pet's lives, and therefore your family's life. Same as humans, dogs and cats get pericardial effusion, pneumothorax, pleural effusion, upper airway obstruction, bowel obstruction, hemoabdomen, septic peritonitis, necrotizing pancreatitis, diabetic ketoacidosis, aspiration pneumonia, fungal pneumonia, zoonotic diseases, obviously the list goes on. Myself as one veterinarian treats every ailment that your pet will have throughout their life no matter what system it is affecting or how emergent/severe the situation is. Do any of you have dogs or cats that you love? That your children love?

Imagine driving to an emergency veterinarian because your beloved dog is in respiratory distress. You call to let them know you're coming, but you are sent to another hospital because the clinic is at capacity. Would you rather have your chiropractor or your veterinarian properly staffed in that moment?

Imagine your sweet cat has a bowel obstruction and needs urgent attention. You drove across the state just to find a place that could treat her and then were turned away. Are you thinking of that hip surgery you waited 3 years for now? Or are you wishing there was a veterinary staff available to help you.

This is the reality of families in our state due to COVID devastating our veterinary community. There are too many patients coming into veterinary ERs due to general practices having limited availability due to COVID. ERs are also dealing with not having enough staff or veterinarians due to COVID.

Veterinarians who would normally fill in these extra shifts at ERs are staying home to try to keep their families safe and avoid exposure beyond their primary position.

I know it is probably easy to think of this in the sense that animal lives are not more valuable than human lives as so many human lives have been lost. The lives lost during this pandemic are devastating. But who to give a vaccine to is a much bigger question that involves our entire health care system. And veterinarians should be considered to be a part of it.

Veterinarians have been showing up for our patients every day with no appropriate PPE or government protection. We as veterinarians have watched these animals and families suffer because we have been overrun and understaffed due to COVID.

I went to the doctor myself for a very emotional taking appointment last week, and they would not allow my husband to come in with me to support me during a very difficult time. There was security at the door to enforce that rule, should we have disagreed. Veterinarians have not been able to implement those same mandates and certainly have no way to enforce them when we try. Instead, we are receiving death threats and other acts of violence from families when they are even asked to wear a mask inside the building, let alone only have 2 people present with their pet during in-person appointments or end of life care. Regularly, we comfort families in a tiny exam room during euthanasia or end of life decisions where their tears and snot are dripping on us. We have no security detail to protect us when we kindly ask them to put their mask back on and they respond with threats of violence towards myself and my staff. I

From: [Lori Fowler](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Wildlife Rehabilitators
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 11:01:03 AM

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Wildlife rehabilitators have not been included in the suggested 1b vaccination group. While I know the State Medical Disaster Advisory Committee (SDMAC) has some very difficult decisions to make regarding vaccine roll out I also believe wildlife rehabilitators are important for consideration sooner than later. At this time we do not know what animals may be able to acquire or spread this virus and vaccinating you as a group could potentially prevent a disease reservoir from occurring in the wild. This could help protect public health. As I understand it, letters of public opinion on this are being accepted until **January 18th**.

Lori Fowler
Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator
WWRA Member
IWRC Member

From: [MICHELLE LYNN SIVAK](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Phase 1b Vaccination Plans
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 10:57:29 AM

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

My name is Michelle Sivak and I am currently living in Madison, Wisconsin. I am working as a veterinary assistant. I have seen that veterinary health care professionals are not included in the next phase of the vaccination. I am writing to ask you to include this group in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

I work at an emergency animal hospital, VCA VES. Unfortunately, we do not have the luxury of working from home. We also are unable to socially distance from each other, due to the nature of our job. Sometimes we work with difficult animals who need multiple people to restrain. Most daily tasks that we do require more than one person. We are in very close contact with each other all day long. We've already had a few employees contract the virus, pulling them from work for isolation. This also puts all employees who were exposed out of work as well. With staffing already being an issue, having our employees isolate is not ideal. Many animals would not get proper care if we had to start turning away clients because we could not handle the case load. Many other animal emergency clinics in town are already overwhelmed and do not have the capacity to serve all of the animals that need to be cared for. With many primary clinics closing down, clients come to us as we cannot shut down. We have to be open for all the life threatening emergencies happening. Clients who come to us for non-emergencies do so since their primary clinic is shut down. This is very frustrating for not only us, but for the clients as well. They have to wait longer to be seen since their pet is stable and they take out their anger on us. We also are still doing our curbside process. Many clients are not happy about this, as they would prefer being inside with their pet. There are a handful of owners who are still not wearing masks when we come out to grab their pet. Some like to get close to us as we discuss what has been going on with their pet, and we sometimes have to climb into their cars to grab their pets or touch them to grab their pet from their arms. We are most definitely at risk to the virus at this time. The State of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Veterinary Examining Board has deemed us essential workers, so I am not sure why we wouldn't be included in this next phase. Even if our main job is working with animals, we still have to directly work with owners who are not always compliant.

I hope you can please consider this request.

Michelle Sivak
Michelle Sivak

From: [Stacey Abraham](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine Subcommittee-Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 10:54:05 AM

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18 January, 2021

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

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

My name is Stacey Abraham and I am from West Bend, Wisconsin. I am a certified veterinary technician (CVT) and office manager of Oconomowoc Animal Hospital. I am writing to ask you to include veterinarian health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

We are a small 17 employee practice and have done a complete overhaul of the way we practice veterinary medicine. Since March 2019 we have switched to complete curbside veterinary care, with the exception of euthanasia appointments. We have switched to using cloth masks for our employees and for awhile were reusing non-sterile gloves due to supply issues related to the global pandemic. Because of our strict curbside service, we have been lucky that COVID-19 has not made us close our doors due to an outbreak amongst our staff, but we have been lucky. Allowing us to be in the Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan would allow us to keep our staff safe and our doors open.

Thank you for considering this request.

Stacey Abraham, CVT
Office Manager
Oconomowoc Animal Hospital
262-567-2122
oahvet@att.net

From: [MARY KROLL](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine Subcommittee - Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 10:29:15 AM

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Please include Zoo Keepers in phase 1B. [REDACTED] works at the Milwaukee County Zoo and is considered a critical infrastructure employee. She does not have the option of not going to work and in her job capacity she has no choice but to interact with co-workers and the general public. She has the potential to not only spread the virus to people but also endangered animals. There are many times when the workers are unable to social distance when caring for the animals especially when doing medical procedures. In the building she works in, it's incredibly hard to social distance from guests. Guests frequently wear their masks inappropriately or pull them down to speak to a keeper. Anytime a zookeeper is out doing something, people crowd around and the zookeepers are finding it difficult to keep social distance.

[REDACTED] is also high risk due to preexisting health conditions. She spends a great deal of time trying to keep to her self safe. She's fanatic about hand washing, disinfecting and very rarely goes out. She pretty much stays home all the time if she isn't working. Everything is delivered or curbside pick up. Her biggest exposure risk is at work for both herself and the general public.

Thank you,
Mary Kroll

From: [Ruthanne Chun](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine subcommittee - Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 10:00:17 AM

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18 January 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 Ruthanne Chun 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 the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I am lucky to be an educator and thus included in phase 1b through that route. I am writing to advocate for my colleagues, who provide preventive care and necessary medical care to cattle, swine, companion animals, zoo animals and wildlife. Veterinarians work in food safety, in Public Health, as well as in clinical situations. Throughout the pandemic, veterinary medical clinics have remained open and veterinary medical professionals interface daily with the public in order to provide routine, urgent and emergent care for patients. We are experts in recognizing zoonotic disease and are at the front lines of surveillance and management of situations such as swine and avian influenza. Exclusion of veterinary medical professionals in Phase 1b COVID vaccination plan is a serious oversight, and I urge you include this important health profession in Phase 1b.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Ruthanne Chun, DVM

From: [Rylee Pulvermacher](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine subcommittee phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 9:25:02 AM

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I believe veterinary staff should be included in phase 1B of the vaccine roll out. In the winter months in Wisconsin it is very dangerous for us to be doing curbside service while walking many scared and anxious dogs who don't walk well on a leash over the ice slush and snow to and from the clinic. Also owners want to be physically with their animals during appointments and the only way we can allow that is if the staff get vaccinated. Also it is very hard for staff members to socially distance while doing our jobs as sometimes it takes 2 or 3 people to help with procedures.

Please consider veterinary staff to be included in phase 1B of the vaccine rollout.

If you have any questions please let me know and I'd be happy to help!

Thank you for your consideration!
Rylee

From: [Govett, Pamela](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine Subcommittee Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 9:22:23 AM
Attachments: Outlook-zdd5k0wv.png

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To Whom it May Concern,

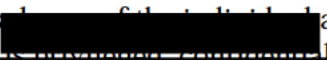
I am writing to urge you to consider veterinarians for the upcoming 1B phase of vaccinations. We work in all areas of animal and public health, and often work in conjunction with human doctors in cases of zoonotic diseases including this novel coronavirus. While of particular interest to the Wisconsin economy would be the dairy veterinarians, my staff at the zoo and I have been essential workers at the zoo and have never been able to work from home. We worry about our work with endangered bats, mustelids, big cats, and primates- all of which have been shown to be able to get infected with COVID-19. Of particular concern is our highly endangered Bonobo population (Pygmy Chimpanzee) of which we have the largest population (19) being managed in human care in the world. Their genetics are similar (98%) to humans. We give them flu shots every year as they are extremely susceptible to respiratory diseases. A significant COVID-19 outbreak in this species would be catastrophic to the world population. To avoid this, we have implemented strict biosecurity measures including appropriate PPE. Having veterinary staff that have been given the vaccine would be very important in preventing disease transmission. Considering the fact that veterinarians are involved in one health and disease transmission from animals to humans (and vice versa), I urge you to consider veterinarians as part of Phase 1B. Thank you for your consideration.

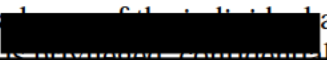
Kind regards,

Pamela Govett, DVM, Dipl. ACZM
Senior Staff Veterinarian
Milwaukee County Zoo
10001 West Bluemound Road
Milwaukee, WI 53226
(414) 256-5471
pamela.govett@milwaukeecountywi.gov




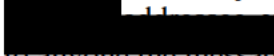




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From: [Animal Clinic Fort Atkinson](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: vaccine subcommittee - phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 9:02:55 AM

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Dear Secretary-Designee Palm and Members of the SDMAC vaccine distribution subcommittee

On behalf of the veterinarians at the Animal Clinic of Fort Atkinson and the veterinarians across the state I am writing to respectfully implore you to remember veterinarians as part of the 1b vaccine prioritization.

Veterinarians have been open and working since the beginning of the pandemic as we are deemed essential frontline workers. We are legally NOT ALLOWED to do telemedicine health (unlike many of our human medicine counterparts). Therefore, we have to see in person our patients to take care of them. Similarly it is next to impossible to remain six feet apart from clients or staff when handling animals in order to examine them to provide them the best care.

We are very disappointed to see that we are, yet again, being left off the list of people that are recommended to be in the next phase of vaccination

We urge you to please allow us to continue our important work in safety for ourselves and our staff.

Thank you
The Veterinarians of the Animal clinic of Fort Atkinson

From: ceseek@tds.net
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine subcommittee--Phase 1b
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 8:54:47 AM

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18. January 2021

Via email TO: DHSSDMAC@dhs.wisconsin.gov

Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

Re: Veterinarians and Veterinary Team Members – Phase 1b COVID Vaccination Plan

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

Greetings! My name is Calico Schmidt and I am a small animal veterinarian and clinical instructor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison's School of Veterinary Medicine. I am writing to respectfully ask you to include veterinarians and other veterinary health care professionals in Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Veterinarians and veterinary team members interact with many people on a daily basis. Although we are able to increase physical distancing with clients by offering curbside appointments, we still contact a number of people and must work closely with members of our veterinary team as we provide care for clients' animals. Our pet-owning clients regard their pets as family members, and an inability to provide care for their animals due to a COVID outbreak at our clinic would negatively impact the lives of many clients, in addition to our animal patients. For our teaching hospital's large animal clients who own production animals such as cattle and goats, sick animals who are unable to receive veterinary care due to a COVID outbreak at our hospital would have detrimental effects on our clients' very livelihood. In addition, many of the faculty and staff members at the University of Wisconsin's School of Veterinary Medicine are teaching and interacting with students, interns and residents daily. Protection against COVID will help us to best serve our clients, patients and students at this difficult time.

Veterinarians and veterinary team members realize you have many difficult decisions to make regarding distribution and timing of COVID vaccines. We are thankful for your time and dedication to this task. Please strongly consider adding veterinarians and veterinary health

[REDACTED] the implementation of Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Calico E. Schmidt, DVM, CVMA
Clinical instructor
University of Wisconsin-Madison
School of Veterinary Medicine

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Joanne Dean](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: vaccine subcommittee for Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 8:46:50 AM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to implore you to include Zoo professionals in Tier 1B COVID-19 Vaccine Roll-Out in the state of Wisconsin. I am the [TITLE] at the Racine Zoo, and myself and my staff are essential personnel who have been working every day through the pandemic. Regardless of closures, our animals still need care. Staff replacement is difficult as our jobs are highly skilled. An outbreak leading to insufficient staff trained in working with large carnivores, for instance, could put us in a critical position.

We do not want to put any of our staff or animals at risk, and we do not want Wisconsin to be the next in the news for another zoonotic outbreak. While we are utilizing every PPE and preventative measure available, recent news out of San Diego Zoo, arguably the top zoo in the nation, of an outbreak among their gorillas shows zoos to be just as high risk of spreading as mink farms – perhaps greater, as we also interact with the public on a regular basis. We have worked closely with other zoos and the USDA to try to reduce risks. But with nearly 1,000 animals at the Racine Zoo, many of them, including great apes, big cats, mustelids (mink relatives) and more proven to be susceptible to COVID-19, vaccination is essential for our staff and a critical step for public health.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2020 and into today, our Zoo also has worked directly with children in both education and childcare. Our camps – Zoo Camp in the summer, and Zoo School during the school year – provide not only educational benefits, but are critical child care for parents. While we have followed all CDC recommendations, and additional restrictions recommended by the American Camp Association, vaccination of our education staff is crucial and should be included alongside all other childcare professionals.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security understands these points, and as such, lists, “Workers performing services to animals in human care, including zoos and aquariums” as critical infrastructure workers in, “Advisory Memorandum on Identification of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers During COVID-19 Response”.
(https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Version_3.0_CISA_Guidance_on_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workers_3.pdf)

While we understand the need to prioritize receipt of limited vaccinations, including all zoo professionals in Wisconsin, defined as those working in institutions with live animals maintained primarily for public exhibition, would be a miniscule number compared to other groups included in Tier 1B. Please make the right decision and include zoo professionals in Tier 1B of COVID-19 Vaccine Roll-Out.

Sincerely,

Joanne Dean

Racine Zoological Society

From: [Dave Edinger](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine Subcommittee - Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 8:42:47 AM

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Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm
Department of Health Services

State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee
Vaccine Distribution Subcommittee Members

RE: DCVMA Urges Veterinary Professionals be included in COVID-19 Vaccine Priority Group 1b

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

I am disappointed to see our veterinary professionals overlooked in this recommendation for the next phase of vaccine distribution. We respectfully urge you to include all Wisconsin and Dane County veterinary personnel in the COVID Phase 1b Vaccine Priority Group.

In my small animal surgical practice, we are in contact with dozens of WI citizens every week as part of our daily essential work keeping their loved dogs and cats healthy. We have strict rules for sanitizing and face mask wearing and will continue this indefinitely.

Without vaccination, however, we are constantly at risk for shutting down as critical staff members are quarantined at home.

I hope you will re-consider including all veterinary professionals in this next phase of vaccination.

Sincerely,

Dr. David Edinger, DVM, DACVS
Small Animal Surgeon and owner of Edinger Surgical Options, inc.



David T. Edinger DVM, DACVS
Board-certified Small Animal Surgeon & Medical Director

(608) 845-0002
1848 Waldorf Boulevard : Madison, WI 53719
deding@edingersurgicaloptions.com
www.edingersurgicaloptions.com



From: [Shawn Hook DVM](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine Subcommittee - Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 8:12:14 AM

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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:

To who this may concern. I have been operating a single doctor veterinary practice throughout this sad pandemic that the world has seen. Although we are not in human hospitals, we are on the front lines seeing patients and clients throughout this pandemic. I was disappointed to see that were not included in the Phase 1b of the Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Our business and all veterinary businesses have been busier since the pandemic as people are home with their pets more or adopting because they are home more. Our profession is needed now more than ever. Many of us like myself are single Doctor practices, especially in rural Wisconsin. If we become ill with COVID-19 our whole clinic will be shut down and it will not only affect the workers being out of work, but also the patients and clients who can not get their pets the care that they need.

I implore you to please reconsider you not including Veterinarians and staff in the Phase 1b vaccination plan.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider.

Sincerely,

Shawn Hook DVM

Arbor Ridge Pet Clinic

[2935 South Fish Hatchery Road Suite #16](#)

[Fitchburg, WI, 53711](#)

608-274-3880

fax 608-274-3883

www.arborridgepetclinic.com

From: [Shishir Sheth](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine Subcommittee - Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 7:47:24 AM

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January 18th, 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 Shishir N. Sheth, MD, from Mequon, Wisconsin. As the parent of a 4th year veterinary student 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.

Veterinarians, vet students, vet techs, and other veterinary health professionals, are in close contact with the public and therefore at high risk of contacting and spreading Covid19. The pandemic has caused a large rise in pet ownership, leading to more veterinary visits, especially at clinic for people experiencing economic hardship. Vaccinating veterinary professionals in Phase 1B will help prevent further worsening of the pandemic.

Thank you for considering this request.

Shishir N. Sheth, MD

From: [Maria Gonzalez-Cerra](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Vaccine Subcommittee - Phase 1B
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 7:43:53 AM

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January 18th, 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 Maria C. Gonzalez-Cerra, MD, from Mequon, Wisconsin. As the parent of a 4th year veterinary student 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.

Veterinarians, vet students, vet techs, and other veterinary health professionals, are in close contact with the public and therefore at high risk of contacting and spreading Covid19. The pandemic has caused a large rise in pet ownership, leading to more veterinary visits, especially at clinic for people experiencing economic hardship. Vaccinating veterinary professionals in Phase 1B will help prevent further worsening of the pandemic.

Thank you for considering this request.

Maria C. Gonzalez-Cerra, MD

From: [Jacqueline Sandberg](#)
To: [DHS SDMAC](#)
Subject: Wildlife Rehabilitators in Group 1b
Date: Monday, January 18, 2021 7:05:47 AM

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

My name is Jackie Sandberg and I am from Madison, WI. I am a wildlife rehabilitator at Dane County Humane Society, where we rehabilitate up to 4,000 wild animals per year. 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 group of licensed individuals who provide care for native wildlife in our state. Given the nature of this pandemic, research on the 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 hope that this group of individuals will be included for the benefit of all the public, just as mink farmers have been.

Thank you for considering this request.

Jacqueline E. Sandberg (CWR, M.S. CBSD)

Wildlife Training Supervisor
Dane County Humane Society's Wildlife Center
5132 Voges Rd. Madison, WI 53718
608-287-3235