

Speaker 1:

Good evening and welcome. Welcome everyone. Looks like we had some folks dial in early on our inbound participant line. I want to thank you all so much for being on time and prompt. So again, good evening and welcome. Welcome everyone. If you are just joining, you are live on the line for our telephone town hall meeting we have for you tonight with Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan. Again, thank you so much for joining us for this evening's live telephone town hall with your Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan, the US representative for California's 44th congressional district. Now, tonight, we're going to be focusing on the COVID vaccine rollout right here in LA County. So tonight, if you want to get in line with your question, comment or concern, I invite you to do that by pressing zero on the keypad on your phone. So again, hello and welcome everyone.

(repeats information several times)

Speaker 1:

All right, we already have quite a few residents and neighbors on the line tonight. So one last time I'll remind everyone. You can press zero on the keypad on your phone to get in line with your own question to pose to our three speakers this evening. Again, we have Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan. We have LA County supervisor, Janice Hahn and Dr. Seira Kurian from the LA County department of public health, and she is a co-lead of vaccine operations. So now is your chance to get that question asked to pressing zero. You can press seven again, to provide us your email address. So with that, it is now my pleasure to officially get our call started off this evening by turning this over to Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan, please take it away.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Thank you so much. Thank you everybody for joining us. Let me start by saying that tonight, our hope is to provide information and answer questions on resources to help you during this COVID crisis. Unfortunately, there's a limited supply of vaccine in LA County and throughout the country. And so we have received some calls about trouble people getting appointments and signing up. I tried myself a couple of times, but then just the other day, LA County said more are released and they're released almost daily, I was then able to get an appointment. So we're going to have to keep trying.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

We have a new president and so we have somebody who's now focused on COVID and the vaccine rollout. President Biden has ordered the additional purchase of 200 million doses of the COVID vaccine. The idea here is to be able to get more vaccine doses and has enlisted the federal government to help. Before, it was just on the states and local government. And so the federal government now is stepping up to try to help FEMA get sites also set up, but also to get funding to state and local governments so that the county and cities can continue to provide more doses as quickly as we can to get people vaccinated.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

The president also activated the Defense Production Act to make sure that there's available more PPE and more ability for healthcare workers to get the protections that they need. We also did just the latest update on Johnson & Johnson, is working on a single dose vaccine that we understand may be out in March. So I think that will help. We ask people to continue to be patient as we do all we can to get people who want the vaccine to get it. And I will encourage everybody who can to get it as quickly as

they can. And so today we have supervisor Janice Hahn, who is going to answer questions and talk about what the county is doing. Before I introduce her, let me quickly mention that if you did not receive your SEC \$600 release payment from the federal government, which is the second round, please call our office so that we can help follow up for you.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

If you are in a mixed status family, you did not qualify for the first \$1,200, you will now qualify for the \$600 and you will be able to also claim that \$1,200 you did not get before. So, if there's one person in your family, one of your parents, have a social security number, they are now eligible for that relief. So if you have questions, you can call our office about that. There is an effort also in Congress to get you an additional \$1,400. So we're starting that process next week so that we can work to get that legislation passed, to get more money in people's pockets.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

So we have a lot of information about moratoriums on rent of foreclosures, additional food assistance. And the last thing I want to mention is that President Biden also issued a new order on Friday, extending the freeze on federal student loan payments until September 30th, 2021. So you should reach out to your federal loan provider to make sure you're taking advantage of that. So I am going to turn it over now to Supervisor Janice Hahn, so she can give you her update. We can get to the doctor, and then we'll open up to questions and get you as much information as possible. And with that, it's my pleasure to introduce supervisor Janice Hahn, thanks for fighting for seniors and for getting the vaccine out. Supervisor.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Well, thank you so much, first of all, for doing this tonight, Congresswoman Barragan, and thanks for having me join you. We've had a rough 11 months here in LA County, over 1 million of our LA County residents have caught this virus and we've lost 15,000 people to this deadly disease. But now there is a light at the end of the tunnel with these vaccines. But in LA County, we have to vaccinate 10 million people twice until we get to one dose vaccine. It's an absolutely massive undertaking, the largest undertaking of this kind, frankly, that we've ever done. And maybe some of you on the phone call tonight are old enough to remember when we distributed the polio vaccine sugar cubes back in the 1950s. But back then, LA county's population was just 4 million, now it's 10 million.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

So we started with vaccinating healthcare workers, our long-term care facility, residents and staff. And then last week we opened it up to residents, 65 and older. And we did this because 70% of the people right now who are dying of COVID-19 are in this age group. And the sooner we can get you vaccinated, the sooner we can save lives and keep our hospitals from being overwhelmed. And that being said, it's not been the kind of rollout that I would have liked to have seen. I've been very frustrated and I'm sure many of you have been too. I'm sure I'm going to hear tonight from a lot of people on this call that have had real issues getting an appointment for their first vaccine or their second, like Congresswoman Barragan. The county is working around the clock to increase the capacity of our call center and a new online registration system has launched on the website, and I hope this will fix a lot of the problems that people have experienced.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

But I've also heard of good experiences when people actually get their vaccine appointment and then go for their vaccine. They talk about being organized, smooth, well-run, and doesn't take that long and it doesn't hurt that much. But the biggest problem we have is we don't have enough vaccines to go around. And I know Congresswoman Barragan is fighting to get LA County more vaccines. Vaccinating everyone is going to take time. It's going to depend on the vaccine supplies, but the work is underway. And every person that we vaccinate builds our collective immunity against this deadly virus.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

I know there's going to be plenty of questions tonight. I'm going to try to answer as many of you can, but I'm not a doctor nor do I play one on TV, but luckily Dr. Seira Kurian is here with us on the phone tonight and I would like to introduce her now. Dr. Kurian is trained in pediatrics as well as public health and preventative medicine. She worked in academic medicine before joining the LA County department of public health in 2008. She joined the division of community health services as a physician specialist. And in 2016, she became the director of the division of medical and dental affairs. But most importantly, right now during this current COVID-19 pandemic, she has served as the co-lead for vaccine operations. Dr. Kurian would you like to say a few words?

Dr. Seira Kurian:

Yes. Thank you Supervisor Hahn and Congresswoman Barragan and your team for the opportunity to speak with everyone tonight about what's happening with COVID-19 and our efforts around vaccination specifically. So public health has really tried to ramp up our capacity to complete vaccinations for all of the eligible priority groups that have been identified by the CDC. And with more specific guidance that's been provided to us by the state and in an effort to do this, we've stood up five large scale vaccination sites. We've partnered with the city of Los Angeles and their large capacity site at Dodger Stadium, as well as various community vaccination sites, pharmacies, federally qualified health clinics and worked with medical providers and hospitals to really help get the vaccine out. And as has been mentioned, vaccinations are currently available by appointment for our healthcare workers and for county residents that are aged 65 years and older.

Dr. Seira Kurian:

A few things to note, we are really requiring everyone to have an appointment for their vaccination. And at the appointment, residents duty to show confirmation that they have an appointment and documentation like an ID verifying their age or their work or a pay stub, to really ensure that they are part of the eligible population. And as was mentioned, also the vaccine supply is still extremely limited. And so we really urge patients as much as possible as we work really urgently with our federal and state partners to try and expand the capacity and the supply in the weeks ahead. But because of, again, this very limited supply of vaccine that's coming into the county, we really only have a very limited number of vaccination appointments for our frontline healthcare workers and our County residents that are 65 and older. It is important to note though, residents may also receive communication from their own health care provider with information about COVID-19 vaccinations, because as I noted, we are also partnering with clinics and hospitals. That is another source of vaccination.

Dr. Seira Kurian:

For folks who have not received communications from healthcare providers, they can visit our vaccinatelacounty.com website to try and schedule an appointment for vaccination once the appointments become available. For those that don't have access to a computer or the internet, we do

have a call center that's open daily from 8:00 AM to 8:30 PM to help individuals schedule appointments. And that number is (833) 540-0473. But we definitely encourage individuals to try and use the website whenever possible to sign up for an appointment because we do know that there are very long wait times on the phone. But in the meantime, it is really important for us to continue to do what we have been doing.

Dr. Seira Kurian:

We know that the vaccines are 95% effective in preventing symptomatic disease, but we're still learning a lot about how long immunity lasts after vaccination. So it is important to continue to wear your face covering, maintain physical distance, wash your hands regularly and not mingle with people outside of your immediate household, because these are also part of the tools that are very effective in slowing the spread and keeping people alive as we continue our vaccination efforts. So with that, I'll hand it back to the moderator.

Speaker 1:

Wonderful. Thank you so much. Again, you've just heard from our three speakers tonight. First off, we obviously have Congresswoman Nanette Barragan. We also have LA County supervisor, Janice Hahn, and you just heard from Dr. Seira Kurian, the LA County department of public health. She's a co-leader of vaccine operation. So we are going to get started here with your questions. We have Steve before Chris, but I want to remind everyone to get in line with your own question, press zero on the keypad on your phone. Also tonight, we are collecting your email addresses. If you would like to sign up for email updates, press seven on the keypad on your phone. All right, let's get Steve live. Steve from San Pedro. You are live right now. Please go ahead with your question.

Steve:

Hi, good evening. And thanks for having this opportunity to ask questions. I was able to get my vaccine on Sunday at the forum. I'm 65 years old and it was smooth. Everything went well. It wasn't painful, no side effects. I'm relieved in a lot of ways. When I go out, I feel like I have an additional layer of protection and I'm really thankful for that. So that's the big thing. But the other thing, I just wondered how come I didn't get a bumper sticker or a pin that said I've been vaccinated. I don't get that.

Speaker 1:

Great question, Steve. We are so glad to have you on the line. Let's have Supervisor Hahn jump in here. What can you say to Steve?

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Thank you. Hey, Steve. Glad you're on here. Yeah, I know. I think that we all should have something that says we've been had our first dose. I understood, your other question was about how you get your second appointment. And starting on Saturday at the LA County side, when people got their vaccines, they were given a little card that said your second appointment has been made for you. We didn't do that leading up to Saturday. Now we're doing that. And emails will be coming to you to tell you exactly when you're going to have your next appointment, but your next appointment has been made. The dose is there and you'll be notified by email when that is.

Speaker 1:

Excellent. Thank you so much, Supervisor Hahn. Thanks so much, Steve, for joining our conversation this evening. Now you did just hear from supervisor Hahn, if you want to join her weekly newsletter, you can sign up for the Janice journal that is at hahn.lacounty.gov. So go there right now while you're listening in and sign up for Supervisor Janice Hahn, Janice Journal, weekly newsletter, and bunch of great information there as well. All right, let's go right away to Chris from Wilmington. Chris, you are live right now. Please go ahead with your question.

Chris:

Good evening and thank you for this opportunity. How soon will there be more local places to get the vaccine? I'm an oxygen patient. So I only have limited supply and time when I go out and my husband is not in good health either. So we really can't go to the forum or one of these large venues. How soon will it be available at, say, Walgreens or CVS or a local area place?

Speaker 1:

Great question, Chris. Let's bring in Dr. Seira Kurian. What can you say to Chris?

Dr. Seira Kurian:

Yeah. Chris, thank you so much for your question. So part of what we're doing right now is onboarding a bunch of partners that can really help us get this vaccine out, including pharmacies. So we have onboarded, for example, a variety of Ralph's pharmacies and a number of other pharmacies throughout the county. We have about 70 that are currently offering vaccination. We have a number more that have been brought on board. Part of the rate limiting factor though is getting those vaccine doses. So until we can really get some more vaccines, we don't have the vaccine to give out to these different facilities.

Dr. Seira Kurian:

And so we're really trying to push with our state and federal partners to see if there's opportunities to get more doses in so we really can expand out to include more people. But you can go on vaccinatelacounty.com and check out to see if there is a pharmacy that's located close by to you. They may not have doses at the moment, but you can keep checking back and as appointments get loaded, there might be an opportunity for you to get vaccinated through that local pharmacy.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Can I just add to that, Chris. One of the things as the doctor said, we need more vaccines so that we can be having more community partners. But I think it's a good idea to use our elementary schools, the campuses, as places for vaccination sites. And I know LAUSD has offered to do that. I think everybody kind of knows where their local school is. You can walk to it. There's a level of trust with schools that sometimes may not exist in some of these other sites. So we are working toward that, but really we're going to wait on really pushing it into your neighborhood until we have a lot more vaccines that we can do that. But that's my plan.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Thank you for that ladies. The one other thing I was going to quickly mention is, if you want to call our office, we can check around if you need a ride. I know there's different programs offering free rides, if you need a ride. And I also noticed that some local like Ralphs were doing vaccines as well. And so I did

see some more local pharmacies that were on the list. So we'd be happy to help you navigate to see if there something that could get you more locally or if we can help get you a ride. I think we're ready for the next one.

Speaker 1:

Excellent. Thank you so much. I love these forums when we can have all three of our speakers weigh in on one question. Thanks so much, Chris. So glad to have you join our conversation tonight. All right, next step, we're going to go to Gloria from Compton. But before we do, want to remind everyone, you can press seven on the keypad on your phone to get in line with your question. We have a bit of a queue there, but our staff members are working fast and furiously to get those accurate email addresses. All right, Gloria, you are live right now. Please go ahead with your question.

Gloria:

Hi, happy new year to all of you. And this is Gloria from Compton and I was calling because it's really frustrating. I've been online to three different, to make an appointment, the vaccinatelacounty, myturn.california, and was one more, and then I called in. Why is it that you go online and there's so many different places where got to try to make an appointment and then they all tell you that it's no appointment.

Speaker 1:

Excellent, Gloria. I am so glad to have you on the line. Let's start with Congresswoman Barragan.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Well, Gloria, thanks for calling in. And I understand your frustration because I had the same thing happen to me. But I know the county and I our supervisor is here with us too, has been helping address this by adding more appointments daily. And I know that's hard for some people to disrupt everything they're doing and continue to be online to check for it. So we're trying to make sure that there's as many resources and opportunities for people they get an appointment. And so I have seen an improvement when I went on the second time and was able to get an appointment. So I'm hopeful that you will be able to as well. Supervisor, is there anything you want to add to that?

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Well, yeah. I mean, I hear you Gloria, and it's been frustrating for a lot of people. I know my neighbors come and knock on my door because they're so frustrated, but I do know that when you go to vaccinatelacounty.com, it does take you to my turn, and then it leads you to all these potential sites that whether or not they have openings or not. And that's how that works. We're trying to fix that to make it even easier. But you know what, I'm offering, I think the Congresswoman is also offering tonight to call our offices. You can call my office in San Pedro. And I have a full-time person that's helping people navigate the website to make an appointment. Sometimes there's no appointments because there's no more vaccines.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

For instance, this next week we're getting 139,000 doses, but only 37 of those... So 37,000 will be for people with the first dose, the rest of them, we're holding for people to get their second doses. So as you can see, it starts off limited, but I'm trying to get the County to have a system where you go on one

time, you put in your information and then you're notified when there is an available appointment, as opposed to making you Gloria, keep going back on and trying, I think that's difficult for a lot of people and we're working to change the system to do that. But if you want a real life person, her name is Kelly. She works in my San Pedro office and she'll help you. And I can give that phone number out later or now.

Speaker 1:

Why don't you go ahead and give it out right now. We have some folks asking for it.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Great. The area code (310) 519-6021. That's (310) 519-6021, ask for Kelly, call Kelly. And if she doesn't answer, leave a message and I guarantee you she'll call you back or I'll fire her.

Speaker 1:

Wonderful. All right. That sounds excellent. I love being a part of these calls. Thank you so much. All right. Congresswoman, let's go to you next. Do you have some questions?

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Yes. So doctor, I get asked these questions a lot, and so I would like for you, see some of our callers have asked them as well. The first question is, are there any side effects to the vaccine? And number two, people are asking which vaccine they should get. What is the best thing to tell those people with those questions?

Dr. Seira Kurian:

Sure. Those are great questions and I know questions that probably are definitely struggling a little bit with. So there are very common side effects that people may get after vaccination, but those are usually very mild side effects, like a little bit of redness or swelling at the site of the injection, a bit of soreness, people might even experience mild fever, chills the next day, but it's nothing that can't be managed with a little bit of Tylenol or Motrin. And usually it disappears within about a day or two. So really mild side effects are what folks can typically expect to experience. A lot of people don't experience anything at all. They get the shot and they're perfectly fine. So we see sort of the gamut there.

Dr. Seira Kurian:

In terms of the much more severe reactions, they're very rare. So far when they looked at both of the vaccines, both of Magenta and Pfizer, they're seeing things on the order of around 11 cases out of a million. So very rare to see the more severe allergic type reaction. In terms of which vaccine to get, the two vaccines that are currently available are both called mRNA vaccines. They're both very similar in terms of both efficacy and how they perform and how they were tested in the various populations they were tested in. So very, very similar. There have not been any head to head comparison type studies done between the two vaccines, but in their independent studies, they performed very, very similarly. So there really isn't a recommendation in terms of getting one over the other.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Thank you for that our doctor. Just to reiterate, when you go to a particular location, people are not going to have the option. That particular location will only have one of the vaccines. Is that correct?

Dr. Seira Kurian:

Yeah, that is correct. And I think the important thing for folks to kind of keep in mind is when you're going for your second dose, if you have to go back online to get your second dose appointment, just keep in mind that you want to get your second dose with the same type of vaccine you got for your first dose. So try to set up an appointment at a clinic that offers the same vaccine.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Thank you, doctor.

Speaker 1:

Excellent. We got those. Thank you, everyone who asked those questions. We are seeing those a lot. So thank you so much doctor for answering that one. Let's go back to our live questions. Now, first off, we have Aaron right now in Compton. Aaron, you are live, please go ahead with your question.

Aaron:

Good evening. How's everyone doing? I was just curious, once you do get vaccinated whether it's the first or second dose are you still able to carry the virus and infect people in the sense of as the way an asymptomatic person would?

Speaker 1:

Great question, Aaron. Let's go back to Dr. Seira Kurian to answer this one.

Dr. Seira Kurian:

Yeah, that is a really good question. So what the studies that were done looked at was really about how effective the vaccines were in preventing significant disease. But we just don't have enough information to know about whether it's effective in limiting the spread of disease. So that's one of the reasons that we are continuing to recommend individuals to adhere to some of those really important measures, like continuing to wear a face covering even after they've received both doses of the vaccine. So it's really about limiting or preventing you from getting significant, severe symptomatic disease when you're getting vaccinated.

Speaker 1:

Great information. Thank you so much, doctor. And thank you Aaron for asking that question. I'm also seeing that one a lot up here too. So a great one to feel tonight. Let's go right away to Alberto in San Pedro. We're going to bring in Supervisor Hahn to answer your question. Alberto, you are alive, please go ahead.

Alberto:

Hi. So I teach at various colleges out here in Southern California, Harbor College being one in Santa Monica and Glendale. So I know I'm in Phase 1B and I have Kaiser, should I keep on checking the website and get vaccinated there or should I just go anywhere, locate a place to get vaccinated?

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Hi, Alberto, thanks for the call. So you're a teacher, so we love our teachers and we want them to be vaccinated as soon as possible. But at this point, as you said, you're in that Phase 1B, Tier One where we have our teachers, our childcare workers, emergency services, food and agricultural central workers. So unless you're 65 and older, because if you are, you can get vaccinated now at any site and I would just encourage you to go on vaccinate.lacounty.com and go anywhere. But if you're not, then you have to wait, I believe, maybe till February, until you would be eligible to be vaccinated.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

At that point, you could go to Kaiser or you could go to any one of the 180 sites in LA County. But I did write a letter to Governor Newsom saying we should prioritize our teachers because I know everybody wants to get back to school. I feel like that's going to be what we can do to really get our economy back and get people's lives back to normal as soon as we get our kids back for in-person schooling. So we hope our teachers get vaccinated as soon as possible.

Speaker 1:

Absolutely. Thank you so much both of you. And thank you, Alberto. Great question there. All right. I am going to give you those websites again. You did hear me give you Supervisor Janice Hahn's website, but again, that is hahn.lacounty.gov. That's H-A-H-N.la county.gov. And I'm also going to give you Congresswoman Barragan's website. That is barragan.house.gov. So again, B-A-R-R-A-G-A-N.house.gov. We have so many folks on the line this evening. We are so glad for the participation, great questions coming in. All right. Tonight we are also simulcasting in Spanish. So we have a whole nother event going exclusively in Spanish. And this is one of the questions that came in from our Spanish side. This is from Marina from long beach, and she says, "If I don't have internet, how do I register?" Not sure who wants to start here.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Well, that would be the phone number then, the phone number to get an appointment with is (833) 540-0473, that's (833) 540-0473. And I hope that's being translated, but if you don't have the internet, that's how you register, is call that number.

Speaker 1:

Excellent. Thank you so much. And it is being translated. That's (833) 540-0473. You can call that number at any time to get yourself scheduled if you do not have internet. All right, next up, let's go back to our English simulcasts. This is going to be for Supervisor Hahn. This one is coming from Shelby in East LA. Shelby, you are live right now, please go ahead with your question.

Shelby:

(singing)

Speaker 1:

Shelby, are you there in the line?

Shelby:

Yes, yes, yes, I'm here. Yes, Shelby is here.

Speaker 1:

You're live, go ahead with your question.

Shelby:

My name is Shelby and I'm 75 years old. And I would like to know, because they got a lot of drive up places for people, but I don't drive and I would like to know, do you have walk in places for elderly people like me and others?

Speaker 1:

Great questions, Shelby.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Yes, thank you. Yeah.

Speaker 1:

So glad to have you on line. Go ahead.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Thanks, Shelby. Yeah, there's a lot of people that don't drive. Although, you can take public transportation to a lot of these sites, but we do have some walk-up sites. Some of your local grocery stores, Ralphs, Vons, Albertsons, their pharmacies are giving these shots. El Camino College is a walk-up site. Balboa Sports Complex is walk-up. El Sereno Recreation Center is a walk-up. And again, the more vaccines we can get from the federal government, we're going to push these out to local communities sites. Again, you probably can walk to a local school, and it's my hope that in the future, that's where we'll be having these vaccination sites. But right now, we do have a walk up. You should probably check with your grocery store, like I said, Vons and Albertsons or Ralph, definitely their pharmacies are giving these shots, but you'll need an appointment with them.

Speaker 1:

Great. Thank you so much. Great information. Thanks so much, Shelby. So glad to have you join our conversation this evening. Next up, let's go to Christina in South Gate. Christina, you are live right now. Please go ahead with your question.

Christina:

Hi, I was calling for Congresswoman Nanette Barragan, thank you for having this town hall. I was calling because I had a lot of people in our community, which is the Southeast Los Angeles area in South gate, ask why don't we have more testing sites and we need more vaccination sites. A lot of people feel like we're being disadvantaged because we're in a low income community and we're not getting the attention other areas are getting.

Speaker 1:

Excellent. Great question, Christina. We can go to all of our speakers here, if we need to. Do you want to start Dr. Kurian or should we go to Congresswoman Barragan?

Dr. Seira Kurian:

Sure, I can start. So again, I think that the big challenge has been our vaccine supply. We've tried to as much as possible set up a variety of different options for folks throughout the county in as many neighborhoods as we can with our pharmacies and then federally qualified health centers, through hospitals and through setting up these mass vaccination and smaller vaccination sites as well. But again, I think one of the biggest challenges that we have is until we can get more vaccine, it's harder to onboard and bring on more partners to really help us with this vaccine. So we've already started the work of getting people through the various systems that they need to in order to register as a vaccine provider. So they're just hanging in the wings, waiting for us to get this vaccine. And as soon as we can, we can bring them on.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Thank you, doctor. And Christina, thank you for your question and for calling in. The reality is that we just had a president who didn't take COVID seriously, who was offered to buy additional doses and did not take the offer for additional doses. It has been a mess. There was no federal plan. Now with President Biden, he has made a commitment to take this seriously because he believes in science and he believes that this is a serious problem because it is a huge pandemic. And so we have heard that President Biden just today made a commitment to purchase 200 million additional doses so that those can be distributed to the states to help get them out.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

He's also enlisted the federal government. Something that hasn't really been used is to allow the National Guard and the FEMA and other federal agencies to help distribute the vaccine and to set up massive sites. So the effort is being done, but we first need to get our hands on those additional vaccines and he has called to buy more of those. And we also have the prospect of, hopefully, Johnson & Johnson will have their vaccine come out, we're told maybe in May which will also help. So we're doing what we can, given the mess this current new administration has walked into. The state and local government also need more money to help be able to purchase it and get it out. So, on the federal level, efforts are being done as we speak, now that there is an administration taking us seriously. Thanks, Christina.

Speaker 1:

Absolutely. Thanks so much for joining our conversation. All right. Next up, we're going to go to John in Long Beach. John, you are live right now. Please go ahead with your question. John, are you there? Do you maybe have us on mute? All right. Looks like John maybe walked away from his phone. So I'll go ahead and read his question. Congresswoman Barragan I'm going to give this one to you. John asks, "Is there any help for home owners with forbearance?"

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Thanks, John. If you have a federally backed mortgage, foreclosure protection is available through the CARES Act and the protections last through January, it says, 2023. I'd have to check that date and make sure that's accurate. But if you have a federally backed loan, you should contact your lender to request a forbearance. We also know that yesterday, Governor Newsom proposed extending eviction protections until June 30th and is including a proposal for rent subsidy programs, it's up to \$2.6 billion. So if we can help you get more information on the forbearance, call our office (310) 831-1799. Thank you.

Speaker 1:

Excellent. It's Great. Thank you so much. Thanks, John. All right, up next, let's go to Ms. Dorothy from LA. Ms. Dorothy, you are live right now, please go ahead with your question for Supervisor Hahn.

Ms. Dorothy:

Hi supervisor, Hahn. Thank you so much. Thank you for this town hall. I'm 67, I had my first vaccine at the forum on Saturday, and I want to know if I would be able to take my second vaccine somewhere else or do I have to take it there? Thank you.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Thank you, Ms. Dorothy. And I hope your experience was positive at the forum. So currently, the county is asking that everyone gets their second dose at the same location where you got your first dose. And the reason for that is that's how they're allotting the vaccines to all of these different sites. They've already portioned out your second dose to be at the forum. So that's how they're going to kind of keep these logistics straight. So need to go back to the same place that you did. And I hope you've got a little card that told you either made your appointment for you or told you when to come back. If you've got Pfizer you, you go back in 21 days, but go back to the same place because that's where your dose is going to be. It's going to be waiting for you. So go back to the same place. And again, I hope it was positive.

Speaker 1:

Excellent. Thank you so much. Thank you so much, Dorothy. So glad to have you on the line tonight. All right. I am going to give you those websites again. There is so much information. You can go to Congresswoman Barragan's website, that's B-A-R-R-A-G-A-N.house.gov. You can also go to Supervisor Janice Hahn's website, that's hahn.lacounty.gov. So that's H-A-H-N.la county.gov. All right, let's up next go to Miss Billy from Carson for Dr. Kurian. While I get this up, I want to do a last call for email addresses. Again, a last call tonight so we can grab your email address and we can keep you up to date going forward, a view of the issues we're discussing tonight, as well as other issues going forward. So that's pressing seven on the keypad on your phone. All right. And again, as I said, this one, let's get Miss Billy live right now from Carson. Let's go to Dr. Kurian. Go ahead, Billy, you're live.

Miss Billy:

Okay, good afternoon. How's everyone? I live in Carson and I've been on the internet for all the last two days, haven't found the place. And you have truly answered those questions for me, but I was just wondering another question wanted to ask, so what's the... And she answered that the ultimatum is 21 days in between the time that you take it, but I was gone out of town the 13th of next month. And I was just wondering, is it possible that you could get it in any other state?

Speaker 1:

Very good question.

Dr. Seira Kurian:

Yeah, no, that is a really good question. Right now, because the supplies are so limited and the states are only getting allocated for individuals within their own jurisdictions, most places including LA County is really asking that it's residents of LA County that get vaccinated. So you might want to check with the

location that you're going to, to see if they're offering vaccinations for out of state or out of county or out of jurisdiction individual. My guess would be that they probably wouldn't be. The good news is that you do have a window of opportunity to get that second dose. So even if you are unable to get that dose exactly 21 days later for Pfizer or exactly 28 days later for Moderna, you can get your second dose up to six weeks after the first dose. And the CDC is saying that that is still fine. Again, it's ideal to get it within that 21 day or 28 day window, but if you can't, you can do up to six weeks after the first dose.

Speaker 1:

Excellent. Thanks so much, Dr. Kurian. I have another one for you right here. There we go. We're going to go to Audrey in Carson. Audrey, you are live right now, Please go ahead with your question.

Alpha:

Hi everyone. Thank you so much Congresswoman Barragan and Supervisor Hahn for organizing this and communicating with residents. My name is Alpha and I'm a medical student at UCLA and Charles R. Drew University. My question is regarding how your leadership is also planning on addressing just systemic inequity and racism regarding health access and vaccine distribution, particularly in South LA, kind of one of the hardest hit regions in LA County. I'm kind of seeing disturbing things in the media regarding individuals with high SES and young people kind of scoping out different communities and clinics and high need to just wait there for leftover vaccines. And I'm just wondering what we can really do, also given the kind of limitations of having clinics during work hours for working class people who may not be able to make it. Just how we as healthcare professionals and leaders can prioritize those who really need it and address systemic racism and health inequity in this pandemic.

Speaker 1:

Great question. Let's go to Dr. Kurian first, before we hear from Congresswoman Barragan.

Dr. Seira Kurian:

That is really a good question and it is something that for sure we're very interested in looking at. We are trying to map and understand just where locations of highest need both from the standpoint of the highest number of cases, but also understanding characteristics such as socioeconomic status, race, to really get a better handle on where these pockets are that we should be focusing our attention in terms of standing up partners and making sure that we're really hitting those communities that are the hardest hit and who really have more limited resources.

Dr. Seira Kurian:

So, in an effort to kind of address that, one of our first measures was really to stand up and partner with our federally qualified health centers that tend to have more clinics in these areas and that can really do outreach and get folks into healthcare systems that they're already familiar with and used to utilizing. Again, as we start to get more vaccine doses in, we'll have more opportunity to continue to kind of stand up those resources in those communities and onboard other partners that we can really continue to work with to reach out to these communities.

Speaker 1:

Thank you so much, Dr. Kurian. Let's go to Congresswoman Barragan.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Thank you. Thank you so much for your response doctor and thank you for the question. This is something I've been quite outraged about, reading that there are clinics in South LA that if they have leftover doses are not going to people in that community or communities of color that are being hit hardest by this, but instead are going to young folks who are good on the internet and are able to find these clinics. So this is something we got to get a handle of. It can't just be... I'm a firm believer that it just can't be, we're not just going to go to the next group of 18 to 65, we have to make sure our communities are not left behind.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

And so we actually had a call with community clinics asking about this report and trying to work with them and saying, "What can we do? Can we help you create a list of people who either live nearby, people who are in highest need, who, if there's a waiting list that they should be on," so that they can go and get them if there's leftover vaccines, because you raise a really good question. I have heard multiple accounts, multiple accounts of people in affluent areas, non-diverse areas, who have no problem getting access to it. And it shouldn't be about who you know or who you're connected to, or how much money you have to get the vaccine. And so this is something I'm also going to raise on Thursday's call. We have a call, a democratic call about increasing vaccine dosage and what we can do to make sure that the hardest hit communities are first in line and they're not being left behind, because CNN just put out a report today that is showing a huge disparity on who's getting the vaccine.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

And the worst of it is, the people who are not getting the vaccine are Black and Brown communities who are dying at the highest rates. So we're trying to get this out, the vaccine out, to as many people as possible. Unfortunately, there has been somewhere along the lines of this inequity and we've got to figure out a way to fix it. But I'm aware of it, I'm working with the community clinics and frankly, at the top level to see if there's a way for us to be able to make sure that those folks are getting it. And so that's why I loved the doctor mentioning the partnership with the federally qualified community clinics, because they're going to be first in line to make sure those that are most vulnerable, that are being hit, are having that access.

Speaker 1:

Great information. Thank you, both Congresswoman Barragan and Dr. Kurian. Great information. All right, let's go to our next live question. We have Sharon, and then we'll get Felipe from our Spanish simulcast. Sharon in San Pedro, you are live right now, please go ahead with your question

Sharon:

Hi, thank you for having me. I think my question was kind of sort of asked. I was just curious, I'm 45 years old, I'm a flight attendant. I know that I'm the next tier that's going to be set to go as far as getting vaccinated, which is no problem for me, I don't mind waiting, but a girlfriend of mine who's 30 something and a film producer already has an appointment. And it makes no sense to me as to why she has been able to get through and get an appointment when people that should be getting them haven't yet. And also, why did California gets so few vaccinations when I'm aware that I can fly to Florida right now and they will give me the vaccination and I'm not even of the age group that should be getting it first.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Perfect. Sharon, so glad to have you on the line. Let's go to Supervisor Hahn first. What can you say to Sharon?

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Hey, Sharon, thanks. Hey, my daughter is a flight attendant too, and I worry about her all the time. And she knows that it's a ways off till she'll be vaccinated, but first of all, California did not get enough vaccines based on our population. And we really think LA County didn't get enough vaccines because we're the epicenter right now of this pandemic. So again, with the congresswoman's help, with our governor's help, we're just going to keep advocating. And we're really hopeful that President Biden will really speed up the production of more vaccines and get them to the hardest hit places. So I hear you, and again, flight attendants, we're not really sure, I guess they would be in transportation and logistics, which is not till 1B, Tier Two. But again, the more we can get vaccines, the quicker we can go through all these tiers.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

And again, if you're 65 and older, because I don't know if flight attendants are 65 and older anymore, but you can get that now. But I do worry about everyone who is in these high risk jobs that you are interacting with people. Now, I do know most airlines do have a mask requirement, but from stories my daughter has told me, sometimes there's passengers that just don't want to comply. So I do worry about our flight attendants. I do worry about so many of our central workers and I just want everybody to be vaccinated. We have to vaccinate everyone in LA County eventually and we'll be able to do it quicker if we can get more vaccines. So thank you, fly safe.

Speaker 1:

Absolutely. Thanks so much, Supervisor Hahn. Thank you so much, Sharon. So glad to have you join our conversations tonight. All right. Let's hop over to our Spanish simulcast for this question from Felipe, lives in South Gate and says, "My wife has not received any of both checks and she is a resident. Could you provide a phone number where I could call to claim for them?" Also, the second question here, "Once you get your first dose, will they call me automatically for the second dose?" Let's go to Congresswoman here for both of those questions.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Thank you for that. First of all, the office number here where Felipe can call for help, his wife has not received her payment is (310) 831-1799. [Felipe 00:58:03] call our office, we have a Spanish speaking help here and we will inquire about your wife's economic payment and why she hasn't gotten it so we can help you with that. On the second question, I believe it was, when will people get the second dose? Is that what the question was?

Speaker 1:

Actually, so once you get the first dose, will they automatically call him for the second dose or how does that process work?

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

So-

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Yeah, I think we had a similar question about that earlier. Go ahead, Hahn.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Yeah. Can I answer that Congresswoman. So yeah, going forward everyone who gets their first dose will have their second dose scheduled automatically and will be notified through email of that confirmation. Those who didn't get that for this whole last week, we're working with the county sites to make sure that they back track and email you and tell you that, "Yes, your next vaccination is scheduled." For non-county sites, we are really working with the Ralph's, the Vons, the CVSs, the community clinics, to do that as well.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

We think that's the most brilliant way to do it. When you get your first dose, they schedule it for you and they let you know by email that that's been confirmed. It doesn't seem right that we should make you then get back on the website, get back on that call center and clog up the system, trying to make your second dose because we know people are stressed out about that. They got their first dose, they can't get their second dose and they're feeling stressed out. So we're working on those glitches. Hopefully by the end of the next week, all that will be automatic. Thank you.

Speaker 1:

Great information. Thank you so much for both of those questions, Felipe. So glad to have you on our Spanish simulcast. All right, up next, let's go to Yolanda, before we go to Miguel. Yolanda in Avalon Gardens, you are live right now. Go ahead with your question for the Congresswoman.

Yolanda:

Good evening everyone, so glad to be with you. I, for some reason, did not get my second stimulus chip in my direct deposit, which I've had over 30, 40 years. They did mail me the EIP card, which was very difficult to activate. Once we did get it activated, I took it to the Citibank branch, could not use it through the ATM, had to go inside, which I particularly do not care to bank inside. I was asked for my driver's license, the card, my ATM, and the lady also wanted social security. So my question is, if and when we get a third round, is there any way possible those of us seniors or people that have had direct deposit have that money in our account versus trying to deal with this EIP card?

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Well, thank you Yolanda for the question. And I'm so sorry you had that experience. The IRS did split up payments between direct deposit checks and EIP cards with the intention of expediting the disbursement of payments. And so, sorry to hear that you were one of those that got a split and had to deal with the card and that you had to go in. I will raise this issue with our leadership to see if in the next round we could maybe try to put a provision in that those who get automatic direct deposit, social security checks, get that same direct deposit. Because you're right, older Americans shouldn't have to go down into a bank and leave their house when we're making sure that they stay home as much as possible and are the most vulnerable group. So I will certainly convey this concern to see if we can do something about helping out in the third round so that we have those cards go out to other folks who have more access and able to get down to a bank. So thank you for that feedback. It's very helpful.

Speaker 1:

Absolutely. So glad to do these calls and so glad to have you on tonight, Yolanda, thanks for joining our conversation. All right, next, let's hop over to our Spanish simulcasts again for a question from Miguel, who's in Long Beach and he says, "When are we going to have the vaccine here in Long Beach? Also, I had COVID how long do I need to wait until I get the vaccine?" Let's go to Supervisor Hahn to answer Miguel's question.

Supervisor Janice Hahn:

Hi Miguel. So if you're in Long Beach, they are so organized and so efficient and are really doing this right. And all you have to do is type in VaxLB, V-A-XLB, and it will take you to the website and that's how you make your appointment in Long Beach. And now I think the doctor should answer that medical question, because I do not know the answer to that.

Dr. Seira Kurian:

Sure. I'm happy to take that question. So really the only recommendation that we give to folks who've had COVID-19, is that we just ask that you wait till your isolation period is over. So the 10 days after your symptom onset, before you go and get vaccinated. And that's really to make sure that we protect all those who are around you from getting infected if you go any sooner than that. So there's really no timeframe other than having been outside of that isolation period. Now, there are some settings that, because again, because our supplies of vaccine are so limited that are trying to conserve those doses and saying like, "If you have a COVID within the previous 90 days, you can actually defer getting vaccinated." And that's mainly because from what we know so far, from the studies that are out there, after you have COVID, your immune system is pretty strong and can usually fend off a repeat infection during that 90 day period. So you could defer getting vaccinated for that period of time, but there's no absolute mandate or restriction around that, if you wanted to get it earlier, you can.

Speaker 1:

Great information. Thank you so much, Dr. Seira Kurian. Thank you also, Supervisor Janice Hahn. And with that, we've gone over a lot of time a little bit, just trying to get in as many of your questions as possible, but I want to let you know that before we wrap our call here, tomorrow, the office of Congresswoman Barragan will respond to everyone who didn't get their questions answered, and everyone will have a chance to leave us a voicemail message at the end of this forum. Again, that's just by staying on the line. I want to give you those websites one more time. You can go to Congresswoman Barragan's website, it's B-A-R-R-A-G-A-N.house.gov. You can also go to Supervisor Janice Hahn's website, it's H-A-H-N.la county.gov. And with that, now I'm going to turn this back to you, Congressman Barragan, give us a few closing remarks and take us to the finish line.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you everybody for joining us. Thank you, Supervisor Janice Hahn and Dr. Seira Kurian. Thank you so much for your expertise, your help, and working together to fight this pandemic and to get people resources. Now, one of the questions we saw a lot in the questions that came up that we didn't get to, was people want to know, when are they going to be able to get vaccinated? If you go to vaccinatelacounty.com, it will show you the plan, where are you are and you can read through it to see which tier you're in so you'll have an idea of when you will be eligible to get vaccinated. Remember, there is a limited amount of vaccines right now, and we're doing the best we can to gain more doses and get more doses in people's arms.

Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan:

The second most popular question I'm seeing still populated, is about the second dose. Be patient as you await that email to get your appointment for the second dose. So please be patient. You are ahead of the game if you got one vaccine already, because you have some immunity to help you reduce the symptoms, should you get COVID. But the best thing we can all do is to wear a mask. This is the best you can do, even from getting the vaccine. The best that you can do to protect yourself is wear a mask and practice social distancing, wash your hands, and take all the precautions that the CDC and the health officials are providing. Okay? So let's continue to do that. Thank you ladies, for your time and your help tonight. We will continue to provide resources. Once again, our number, (310) 831-1799. Please stay safe, everybody and we'll see you soon. Bye-Bye.