January 25, 2021

To: ISHA members

From: President Angela Beckman Anthony and members of the ISHA Executive Board

RE: COVID Vaccine Distribution

ISHA supports priority access to COVID-19 vaccines approved by the Food and Drug Administration for audiologists and speech-language pathologists who provide in-person assessment and treatment services. The services that we provide are essential for individuals with communication, swallowing, and cognitive disorders. While some have provided services remotely, others, who work in settings such as hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, clinics, and schools, have not. Even with strict adherence to mask-wearing and social distancing, our members are at greater risk for acquiring the COVID-19 virus because of the need to interact closely with patients, clients, or students. In some cases, adequate personal protective equipment is not available, and yet our members, recognizing that human communication is essential, risk their lives to serve those with communication and related disorders.

As the COVID-19 vaccine distribution continues, we encourage you to review the distribution phases in Illinois to determine when you will be eligible for the vaccine. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has a link to each state vaccination distribution plan: [https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/covid19-vaccination-guidance.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/covid19-vaccination-guidance.html).

ISHA will continue to advocate for priority vaccine access for our members recognizing that effective communication is essential and that our members will continue to provide needed services regardless of personal risk.

ASHA has sent a letter to the Governor urging priority access for audiologists and SLPs. You can access the letter here: [https://www.ishail.org/asha-advocacy-as-related-to-covid-19-vaccine](https://www.ishail.org/asha-advocacy-as-related-to-covid-19-vaccine)

Other Resources:


On behalf of ISHA, thank you for all the services that you provide to individuals with communication disorders. We appreciate the work and dedication of each one of you, not only during these difficult times but every day. To learn more about ISHA and how we advocate on your behalf go to our website at: [www.ishail.org](http://www.ishail.org)