

We in the Durham VA Health Care System are looking forward to a brighter 2021 now that we have the hope that comes with safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines. These vaccines are in limited supply; therefore, vaccination is currently being offered to Veterans according to prioritization groups as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The prioritization groups are based on:

1. risk of being exposed to COVID-19 (e.g. frontline essential workers)
2. risk of developing severe COVID-19 leading to hospitalization and/or death (e.g. aging Veterans and those with underlying health conditions)

We are preparing for the opportunity to perform vaccinations on a larger scale. Once we receive authorization, we will begin reaching out to more Veterans for vaccinations. To prepare for receiving the COVID-19 vaccination, we highly recommend Veterans establish a [My HealthVet Premium Account](#). When the opportunity becomes available, the creation of the **My HealthVet Premium Account** will allow Veterans to:

1. Safely, securely, and quickly schedule their appointments for the COVID-19 vaccine
2. Avoid long hold or wait times for phone calls
3. Send private messages to Primary Care Teams

To use My HealthVet, you will need a computer with Internet access - that is it! Accessing My HealthVet can be at home or through your mobile phone. All users who have a [Basic](#) or [Advanced](#) My HealthVet account are strongly urged to upgrade to the [Premium](#) account. Veterans that do not have a My HealthVet account should [register today](#). The **Premium My HealthVet** account will allow Veterans to schedule for the COVID-19 vaccine once the Durham VA Health Care System receives authorization to vaccinate more Veterans.

Currently, we are in Phase 1B for COVID-19 vaccinations, which includes Veterans that are 75 years of age or older, Veterans who are dialysis or chemotherapy patients, Veterans who are recipients of a solid organ transplant, Veterans who are homeless, and Veterans who are essential workers. We urge all Veterans to sign-up for the **My HealthVet Premium** account in preparation of the time when authorization is opened to Veterans in different medical categories, you will be able to easily schedule your COVID-19 vaccination appointment.

The **My HealthVet Premium** account also allows Veterans to send secure messages to your Primary Care Team, request medication refills, view parts of your official VA medical records. Please be advised, the My HealthVet Premium account is not an emergency contact system. If you require emergency medical care, please call 911, report to the nearest emergency room, or go to your nearest VA medical center emergency department. If you need to speak to an emergency medical crisis counselor, please contact the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-TALK, then press "1". Crisis Line counselors are available 24/7.