

In 2020, many Concord seniors celebrated their birthdays alone in their homes, isolated from friends and family for their own protection from Covid. As the Covid pandemic spread across Massachusetts and the country, some may have wondered “Will I ever be able to celebrate again with my friends and my family?”

Fortunately, covid vaccines were developed successfully and became available in early 2021. However, some of Concord’s seniors – members of the population most vulnerable to Covid – urgently needed vaccinations but were not able to navigate the complicated process of finding a vaccination site and securing a highly coveted appointment to obtain them on their own.

In an extraordinarily rapid response to this need, the staff of Concord’s Council on Aging (COA) made hundreds of telephone calls to Concord seniors, providing information, identifying vaccination sites, organizing transportation and answering thousands of questions.

Additionally, COA staff quickly realized that a significant number of Concord seniors needed even more direct assistance with vaccinations. Working initially with the Concord Health Department (due to limited vaccine supplies) and subsequently with the West Concord Pharmacy, COA organized local vaccination clinics for Concord seniors, administering both Pfizer and Moderna vaccines during 2021. A total of approximately 200 first and second doses were administered, followed by, most recently, the administration of approximately 300 “first and second booster” doses.

The COA vaccination clinics made a huge difference in the lives of Concord seniors by providing access to vaccination that overcame registration or transportation obstacles.

These vaccine clinics also provided seniors with reassurance about their own safety and in some cases the ability to again spend time with their families who had also received the vaccines. Although the Covid pandemic is not yet over and safety concerns remain, seniors are progressing to the time when they can safely celebrate milestones in person with family and friends.

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COA director Ginger Quarles commented “The Covid pandemic has challenged COA in many novel ways – we initiated new systems that allowed us to continue to provide a variety of services to Concord’s seniors and that ultimately helped us to organize the vaccination clinics. We are deeply grateful for the Concord Health Department’s excellent efforts and West Concord Pharmacy’s enthusiastic collaboration in holding these clinics, and we are delighted that our combined efforts resulted in vaccination of many Concord seniors.”



Pharmacist Diane Briner of West Concord Pharmacy prepares a COVID vaccine dose at one of the vaccination clinics held at the COA.