

Archbold Medical Center mobile COVID-19 vaccine clinic sets out to expand access

Archbold Medical Center staff provided COVID-19 vaccines to a group of very appreciative community members at the Boston polling site building Friday afternoon. Archbold has been operating a vaccine clinic within the hospital for several weeks, and has provided 6650 doses so far. The Boston event was a test-run of a concept where Archbold will partner with various groups within its service area who can help reach those at high risk and may not be able to come to the hospital itself for a vaccine. This may reflect transportation issues or access to the methods of communication being used to announce availability of vaccines.

“We have been very proud and feel like our current vaccine clinic has met the community need given the overwhelming demand, but realize our limitations in providing access to vulnerable populations,” said Archbold Vice President of Clinical Services, Chris Newman. “The mobile vaccine clinics are an important priority for Archbold given the size of our service area and ability to stretch our limited resources to a maximum capacity. We look forward to working with our surrounding communities to meet their needs.”

Boston Mayor pro tem, Twink Monahan, coordinated the provision of a suitable location and the advance scheduling of the 100 people that could be served at this particular 3-hour opportunity.

“We were able to organize all of this thanks to help from the community just volunteering their time to get this up and running,” said Boston City Council Member, Robbie West. “It means a lot to bring this to our community. Everyone we have talked to has expressed how extremely thankful they are for the efforts Archbold has made to bring this closer to home for them.”

Community volunteers along with Hands on Thomas County helped with traffic flow, check-in, and provision of water and hand sanitizer. Alston Watt, Archbold Medical Center Board Vice Chair, sees great potential in the traveling, pre-scheduled, “mini-clinics” that Archbold has proposed. “The leadership at Archbold is extremely focused on serving the community and recognizes the need to get the vaccine out into the community as quickly and safely as possible. Recognizing that some folks will not feel comfortable coming to the hospital for a vaccine, Archbold is bringing the vaccine to them. Once there is a more stable supply of vaccine, we plan to have clinics in different parts of the city, county, and other counties moving forward,” said Watt.

Archbold announced earlier this week that they had temporarily paused accepting new appointments for vaccines through its call center (229-584-SHOT) due to a slowdown in vaccine supply being shipped from the state. But Archbold officials expect to be able to honor all appointments already scheduled and encouraged everyone to come as scheduled unless notified of a change. Those scheduled for their second vaccine dose will also be able to return as planned. Archbold fully expects to begin making new appointments in the future and encourages the community to visit www.archbold.org or follow the Archbold Medical Center Facebook page for up-to-date information.

Archbold indicates that they will continue to seek ways to expand vaccination opportunities in Grady, Mitchell and Brooks Counties, which are also part of the Archbold service area.



Pictured: 103-year old William Gloster Sr. rolled up his sleeve at Archbold's first mobile vaccine clinic in Boston, GA on January 22nd to receive the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.