

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 1st 2022

Secretary Xavier Becerra
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Deputy Assistant Secretary Gary Disbrow, Ph.D
Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Becerra and Deputy Assistant Secretary Disbrow,

Thank you for your strong leadership in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Evusheld is a monoclonal antibody against COVID-19 for those who have moderate to severe immunocompromising conditions, and it was developed by AstraZeneca with financial support from the federal government. Evusheld received an emergency use authorization in early December of 2021. However, the US Food and Drug administration recently revised the authorization for Evusheld to double the initial dose and advised individuals who already received the drug to get an additional dose as soon as possible.

Prior to this announcement, accessibility and availability of Evusheld presented many challenges. We have heard from constituents who have driven hours to receive their initial dose of the drug due to limited supply, and others are waiting patiently while hospitals and medical centers prioritize cancer patients and transplant recipients. However, many are still waiting and not getting expedited access. Some states have even adopted first-come first-served practices while others have adopted a lottery system.

Approximately 3% percent of the United States population is considered to be severely or moderately immunocompromised, which makes them more at risk for serious COVID-19 illness and mortality.¹ This includes an estimated seven million of our constituents who are immunosuppressed for a variety of reasons including cancer treatments, autoimmune diseases, organ transplants and other conditions.

Despite the Administration working diligently to purchase an approximated 1.7 million doses of Evusheld for an estimated 850,000 individuals, only 650,000 doses have been distributed among the states and only 460,000 doses have been ordered.²

It is reported that there is much confusion about the drug among health providers which resulted in roughly 80% of the available doses sitting unused in warehouses and on pharmacy and hospital shelves.

In light of these concerns, we urge you to consider the following recommendations:

- Purchase more doses of Evusheld from AstraZeneca;
- Work in collaboration with AstraZeneca to provide a timeline of production in light of recent COVID-19 restrictions;

¹ Carrie MacMillan, "What Does It Mean to Be 'Immunocompromised'?", Yale Medicine (Yale Medicine, February 14, 2022), <https://www.yalemedicine.org/news/what-does-immunocompromised-mean>.

² Amanda Morris and Sheryl Gay Stolberg, "High Demand for Drug to Prevent Covid in the Vulnerable, Yet Doses Go Unused," The New York Times (The New York Times, March 6, 2022), <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/06/us/politics/evusheld-covid-treatment.html>.

- Direct relevant federal agencies to update guidelines to issue up to date and accurate information to healthcare providers, community partners, and state health officials about the distribution and use of Evusheld
- Work with state health departments to increase the accessibility of Evusheld at smaller scale healthcare sites and those aimed at serving vulnerable communities including rural clinics, transplant centers, dialysis facilities, and federally qualified health centers
- Direct relevant federal agencies to supply healthcare providers and state health officials with relevant guidance on how Evusheld should be prioritized and discourage them from prioritizing Evusheld in ways that do not adhere to NIH guidelines

As COVID-19 cases continue to plummet and restrictions against mask-mandates ease, it is imperative that we continue to support immunocompromised individuals who deserve protection against this virus.

We look forward to hearing from you directly about this important issue. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my legislative director, Brandon Mendoza, at 202-225-2040.

Sincerely,

Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Susan Wild
Member of Congress

Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress

Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress

Mike Quigley
Member of Congress