

# **OPINION: “Massachusetts and New Bedford: get your act together at the vaccine clinic!”**

“Right now, just watched Mayor Mitchell and Channel 12 News discussing that the vaccination rates in Bristol County and particularly in New Bedford are low and that case numbers of COVID-19 are high.

Well, let’s see...maybe the state should get its act together and make it EASIER for patients to get vaccinated. I was at the Andrea McCoy Stadium yesterday at 1:45pm to obtain my vaccine booster along with my 88-year old Uncle. We were waiting, along with at least 50+ others for our vaccines including some folks who were there for their very first vaccines.

The supplies had not ‘arrived’; the computers to register people had not arrived. Now, the ‘WALK-IN CLINIC’ was scheduled to begin at 2:00pm and the supplies were not there yet.

WHAT??? Are you kidding me? Supplies were apparently scheduled to arrive at 1:30pm, from Boston, but the truck was allegedly ‘stuck in traffic’. At 2:20pm, after waiting for over a half-hour, the line still growing for folks who wanted their vaccines, the nurse announced that it would be at least another hour for the supplies to arrive. WHAT A DISASTER!!!!

The state and New Bedford needed to coordinate this better and ensure everything is ready to go and more than just 30 minutes prior to the start of the clinic. This was advertised as a walk-in clinic for Mondays from 2-7pm in New Bedford at McCoy Stadium during the month of November. Why are supplies ‘coming

in' from Boston and more importantly, not scheduled to arrive until 30 minutes prior to start?

I am a nurse, I wonder, how long were those vaccine supplies out of the freezer and not stored properly prior to arrival??? Needless to say, my Uncle and I left as did many others. When I stepped outside, there were many, many people waiting and lots of us leaving. You want people vaccinated here in New Bedford; 'get your act together' and make it easier and more accessible!

Good Lord, the nurse in me was just shaking my head. Incidentally, one of the nurses who was running the operation kept asking those of us who were seated inside whether we were all pre-registered. LOL! I thought she was crazy. No one was pre-registered as this was advertised as a "Walk-in Clinic". She said: "'Well it would have made things move more quickly when the supplies arrived.' Let me repeat, it was scheduled as a walk-in clinic, and pre-registration was not required!

When I called the New Bedford Health Department last week to ask about this clinic, the person I spoke with said that it was a walk-in and said nothing about pre-registration. Sigh.

Needless to say, my Uncle and I will not be trying to access vaccines like that again. We scheduled at CVS Pharmacy instead."-Lori Sylvia-Fournier.