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# Seattle U Partners with Swedish Medical Center to Open Vaccination Clinic on Campus

Ashley Hagar, Staff Reporter

As a way to create more opportunities for people to get vaccinated, if they wish to do so, Seattle University partnered with the Swedish Medical Center to open a new clinic on campus. Seattle U President Fr. Stephen V. Sundborg, S.J. announced the opening of the Swedish Community COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic Jan. 8.

The clinic, located in the Campion Ballroom on campus, will provide students, faculty and staff the opportunity to volunteer and receive the vaccine if desired. The clinic, which plans to remain open for months to come, administered 2,000 COVID-19 vaccines during the first two days of operation. The clinic is currently operating on a four day schedule with Tuesday through Thursday and Saturday appointments, offering eligible recipients a chance to receive the long-awaited vaccine.



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Partnering with the Swedish Medical Center allows students to have earlier access to the vaccine than they may otherwise. As directed by the Department of Health, those who chose to get the vaccine will receive the first dose and are then given the second dosage at a later date.

College of Nursing Dean Kristen Swanson served as one of the main leaders in the clinic by bringing together teams at Swedish Medical Center and Seattle U. Swanson initiated the opening of the clinic Jan. 3 with the main administration leaders of Seattle U, including Sundborg, Provost Shane Martin and the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Wilson Garone. They hosted the first meeting Jan. 4 to plan the clinic and decided on the location for the clinic: Campion Ballroom.

Swanson elaborated on the main goals of the clinic, emphasizing the importance of being able to vaccinate as many people as possible given the doses available.

“We aim to vaccinate 2,500 members of our community a day when we have it going for a full day clinic,” Swanson said. “On the first day, 1,020 members of our community were vaccinated in four and a half hours, and 944 were vaccinated on day two.”

The partnership between Seattle U and Swedish Medical Center marks an important transitory period as more and more Seattleites become eligible to receive the vaccine. In the official announcement of the clinic, Sundborg stressed the importance of the Seattle U’s Jesuit-based mission statement in their involvement and partnership with Swedish.

“We can all be glad that as a university with our mission, we are able to assist in responding to such an urgent—even life-saving—need for the people of our wider community,” Sundborg said.

Swanson also commented on the university's mission statement and how that plays a role in the clinic operating on campus.

"I think the thing I am most pleased with is that this clinic is right in alignment with the missions of both Swedish, which is health for the common good, and Seattle University, which is really to be in partnership with our communities and serve the community as best we can," Swanson said.

Not only will students be able to volunteer to work at the clinic, but some Nursing students will be able to gain clinical experience through the partnership with Swedish Medical Center. Students looking for further information should contact faculty within the Seattle U College of Nursing.

Desiree Hernandez, a second-year nursing student, elaborated on why she volunteered to work at the clinic, emphasizing her gratitude in being involved at any level.

"As a nursing student, the clinic is a great opportunity for me to volunteer and help out in my community. Because I am only a sophomore, I cannot give the vaccine to people yet, so I'm excited to be helping out in other ways," Hernandez said in a written statement.

Hernandez also encouraged other students to volunteer in order to keep the clinic running.

"I know that there are mixed feelings about the clinic being on campus and in a dorm where students are currently living, but I think it's great that we are able to partner with Swedish Medical Center and open our campus to our community," Hernandez added.

Students will be able to sign up for volunteer spots at the clinic through Swedish Medical Center's website. Interested parties are encouraged to check regularly, as newly released volunteer slots are typically not announced in advance.

While some students may be concerned about receiving the vaccine or having the clinic in the Campion Ballroom, staff ensure that all COVID-19 safety precautions are in place. The staff and volunteers running the clinic closely monitor who comes in and out of the building, as they only allow a certain number of people to enter at a time.

Jennifer Huffman, a second-year criminal justice student, mentioned how the newly implemented clinic has provided a glimmer of hope and the potential for a return to everyday life in the future.

"I love the idea of having the clinic on campus. It is safe and easily accessible for students, faculty and those in our community," Huffman said. "I understand there have been a lot of uncertainties surrounding the Covid vaccine, but I believe it is safe and a great step forward to having some normalcy in our lives again."

Even staff members that may have trouble finding time in their schedule to volunteer can do so. In Sundborg's announcement, he encouraged staff to participate in the volunteer service while still receiving pay through the Community Service Leave.

Within just a few hours, over 1,000 volunteer spots for the second week of the clinic filled up. The first week, the clinic was operated primarily by Swedish staff. As a result, some students felt like they missed an opportunity. Fortunately, the clinic staff is hopeful that it will remain in place until June.

Third-year math major Zach Gonzalez was one of the first Seattle U students to volunteer at the clinic, working the morning shift Jan. 18. Initially, his motivation was just to receive the vaccine, but after signing up, Gonzalez recognized the importance of the role and was excited to fulfill the community service he signed up for. After completing his volunteer hours, Gonzalez received the first dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

"There are a wide variety of tasks to do, it gets you moving and working in good teams, you're doing a great service for the public health of Seattle and you get a free COVID vaccine, of course," Gonzalez said of the experience. "I hope the clinic continues to run at a strong rate, and hopefully it will give a huge portion—hopefully all—of the Seattle U population the opportunity to perform meaningful and critical community service, as well as their vaccinations and protection."

Although the clinic is only announcing volunteer schedules one week at a time, Dean Swanson hopes they will be able to continue long-term.

“The reason we’re doing it one week at a time to start, is it has all to do with managing the availability of vaccines,” Swanson said. “When Swedish gets a much clearer understanding of the flow of vaccines into the clinic, we would then be able to start opening it up for more weeks of volunteer sign ups of two or four weeks at a time.”

To volunteer, students can look for the link provided by President Sundborg or visit the Swedish Medical Center’s website [here](#).