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## Kaiser's healthcare workers in Woodland Hills begin vaccinations against COVID-19

Nurses, emergency room doctors and other hospital staff at the Woodland Hills hospital, and other sites in Kaiser's West San Fernando Valley and Ventura County areas, received 1,000 vaccine doses earlier this week.



Nurse Nurse Sukhwinder Kaur gives a COVID-19 vaccination to nurse Deanna Mussell at Kaiser Permanente Woodland Hills Medical Center, Thursday, December 17, 2020. (Photo by Hans Gutknecht, Los Angeles Daily News/SCNG)

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Charge nurse Deanna Mussell was caring for two patients in the intensive care unit when she was called away Thursday afternoon, Dec. 17, to take part in what is expected to be a watershed moment in the battle against the COVID-19 virus.

Mussell is among the first healthcare workers at Kaiser's Woodland Hills hospital to receive a vaccine shot to help protect her from infection from the new virus.

The vaccination happened quickly, and it didn't hurt. But at that moment, one that was marked with a small band-aid on her arm, the 46-year-old Mussell felt a sense of "excitement."

"We've been watching people who have struggled with this (virus) for nine months now, since March, when the pandemic started," Mussell said. "And so it's a remarkable day. There's some hope for things to change."

The past several months have been unlike any she'd experienced during her career, the Chatsworth resident said. Mussell has worked 23 years as a nurse, 20 of them caring for Kaiser's sickest patients in their ICUs.

Not being able to allow family to stay at the bedside of their extremely ill loved ones has been unprecedented for her, Mussell said. She has sometimes had to serve as a surrogate, but she tries to bring family into the room, under limited circumstances, or facilitates the connections through technology, such as with a tablet computer.

"Critical care is a very intimate," Marshall said. "[Patients] have allowed us into the most intimate part of their existence, and their families are a huge part of that."

Eventually, the vaccine will reach the general public, so that part of the work is now largely on hold.

"We want to get back to that, where families are an intimate part of their care," she said.





Nurse Sukhwinder Kaur prepares a COVID-19 vaccination at Kaiser Permanente Woodland Hills Medical Center, Thursday, December 17, 2020. (Photo by Hans Gutknecht, Los Angeles Daily News/SCNG)

Nurses, emergency room doctors and other hospital staff at the Woodland Hills hospital, and other sites in Kaiser's West San Fernando Valley and Ventura County areas, received 1,000 vaccine doses earlier this week. They began administering them on Thursday, part of a wave of vaccinations launching in the Los Angeles area this week.

There are around 3,500 healthcare workers who could be getting vaccinated in this region of Kaiser's hospitals and medical facilities, said Ed Essa, a spokesperson for Kaiser.

The past nine months have been a rough ride for the hospital, says Daniel Gold, works in environmental services.

He cleans and tidies up the rooms of patients. "I make the room look good for them," he said.

And for the few minutes he spent getting the vaccine, Gold said he felt "like a pioneer."

And in the wake of the difficulties of the past few months, he took a moment to celebrate the sense of accomplishment that came from the teamwork that the doctors, nurses and fellow environmental services workers took part in.

"We're always going, and we do pretty good," he said. "I think this Kaiser (hospital) kicks butt."

