

White House to spend billions to boost COVID vaccine supply

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(HealthDay)—The Biden administration plans to invest billions to

partner with industry to expand the nation's ability to produce coronavirus vaccines, ensure domestic supply and help poor nations in their vaccination efforts.

The goal of the plan, to be announced Wednesday, is to produce at least 1 billion doses a year beginning in the second half of 2022, two top advisers to Biden told *The New York Times*.

The funding for the program will come from the American Rescue Plan, the \$1.9 trillion pandemic relief package.

"This is about assuring expanded capacity against COVID variants and also preparing for the next pandemic," Dr. David Kessler, who oversees [vaccine](#) distribution for the White House, told the *Times*.

"The goal, in the case of a future pandemic, a future virus, is to have vaccine capability within six to nine months of identification of that pandemic pathogen, and to have enough vaccines for all Americans," Kessler said.

The administration is also offering booster shots to millions of fully vaccinated Americans, despite sharp rebukes from World Health Organization officials and other public health experts who insist that any new doses should go to low- and lower-middle-income countries first. Many populations living in such countries have yet to receive even a first dose of coronavirus vaccine.

Whether the new plan will satisfy the Biden administration's critics is unclear, the *Times* reported. Many have demanded that the United States build up manufacturing capacity overseas, particularly in Africa, but the Biden plan is focused on building capacity among domestic vaccine makers.

Still, Kessler told the *Times* that the "effort is specifically aimed at building U.S. domestic capacity," but added "that capacity is important not only for the U.S. supply, but for global supply."

More information: Visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for more on [COVID vaccines](#).

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