

Bakersfield College on-campus clinic administers 100 one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccines

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Retired hospital worker Cheryl Tate was happy to secure an appointment at a walk-in clinic at Bakersfield College on Thursday, and doubly happy to learn that she would be among the first in Bakersfield to receive the new Johnson & Johnson single-dose vaccine.

Asked about not needing a second shot like those required by those who receive the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, Tate just smiled behind her jeweled mask.

"I'm glad I don't," she said.

Hosted by BC's Student Health and Wellness Center, the clinic was by appointment only and only for those who are currently eligible.

"I want my quality of life to be decent," Tate said.

Social isolation, elevated anxiety levels, being separated from those she loves — Tate hopes that things will be better once she can worry less about contracting the virus or worse, passing it on to someone she cares about.

Nicky Damania, the director of student life and a key member of the college's COVID-19 task force, said as Bakersfield's community college, BC is a key part of the community and plays a role in supporting the health of the larger community and returning as soon as possible to some form of normality.

In fact several BC volunteers were on hand to assist those arriving for vaccinations, including fourth-semester nursing students Lindsey Murphy and Megan Resendiz, who have assisted with administering vaccines and watched over patients in the observation area, where patients were asked to wait 15 to 30 minutes following their shots.

"This is awesome for the community," Murphy said. "Having the one-dose vaccine is really beneficial."

The past year has been tough on a lot of people, she said. But it feels like we're seeing a light ahead, maybe even an end to the pandemic.

In the observation room sat three generations of the same family, a grandmother, a mother and a son.

"Don't call me grandma," said Fredi Gigrich. "They call me Fufu."

Gigrich said she's optimistic that things will get better, "especially if everyone gets their vaccinations."

Her daughter, Karen Burley, said she came in expecting the shots to "really hurt. But they didn't.

"We're very grateful," she said to receive the vaccine.

BC will host a drive-thru clinic on Saturday as well and also an event next week at its Delano campus. For more information visit BC's website at bakersfieldcollege.edu/studenthealth/clinic.