



**Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care
Public Health**

300 Carlton Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R3B 3M9

February 15, 2024

Re: Increasing Vaccine Uptake for 2023 Influenza and COVID-19 Immunization Program

Dear Health Care Provider:

Manitoba's respiratory virus season has caused added strain to our health care system. Manitobans who are older and with multiple and poorly controlled comorbid conditions are more likely to experience severe illness from influenza and COVID-19. They may also have more encounters with health care providers due to their health conditions. Vaccinations remain the best way to protect Manitobans from severe respiratory illnesses. Public Health encourages you to continue to provide opportunities for clients who have yet to receive their fall 2023 COVID-19 and/or influenza vaccine to receive a dose.

We are also updating our COVID-19 vaccine eligibility so that the following individuals may receive another dose of XBB.1.5 COVID-19 vaccine, provided it has been at least three (3) months from the most recent COVID-19 vaccine dose:

- Adults 65 years of age and older;
- Indigenous people 45 years of age and older, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, regardless of place of residence;
- Adult residents of long-term care homes and other congregate living settings for seniors;
- Individuals 6 months of age and older who are moderately to severely immunocompromised (due to an underlying condition or treatment).

Starting May 1, 2024, except for special circumstances to be considered on a case-by-case basis, COVID-19 immunizations will not be available until the fall 2024 COVID-19 immunization program commences. This is to minimize the impact of getting a late COVID-19 vaccine dose on a client's eligibility for a fall 2024 COVID-19 vaccine.

This information is being updated on the provincial COVID-19 vaccine eligibility page (<https://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine.html#XBB.1.5>).

Please share this letter with colleagues at your facility/clinic.

If you have any questions, please email vaccines@gov.mb.ca.

Sincerely,

Richard Baydack, PhD
Director
Communicable Disease Control

Natalie Casaclang, MD, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health,
Population and Public Health