



## Health

Population and Public Health

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www.manitoba.ca

July 6, 2022

Dear Health Care Provider:

### **RE: EXPANDED HIGH DOSE VACCINE ELIGIBILITY, NEW ENHANCED FLU DISTRIBUTION MODEL & 2022/23 Seasonal Influenza and Pneumococcal Immunization Program Updates**

For the upcoming 2022-23 influenza season, all Manitobans 6 months of age and older will be eligible to receive the standard-dose seasonal influenza (flu) vaccine free of charge. **This year, all Manitobans 65 years of age and older will be eligible to receive the high-dose influenza vaccine free of charge.**

Health care providers are uniquely positioned to answer questions and provide information about immunization. Studies show that a recommendation from a health care provider on immunization is a major contributing factor in a person's decision to be immunized. As a result, health care providers are urged to discuss the benefits of flu vaccines and help patients make informed choices as early as possible in the influenza season to all their clients.

Information on Manitoba's Seasonal Influenza Immunization Program, including factsheets, eligibility criteria, resources, and updates are currently being reviewed and will be posted online shortly.

#### **Pneumococcal Immunization Program**

Individuals 65 years of age and older and those at increased risk for invasive pneumococcal disease at any age are eligible to receive a dose of pneumococcal polysaccharide (Pneu-P-23) vaccine free of charge. For more details on the eligibility for this vaccine, and all other vaccines, please refer to Manitoba's *Eligibility Criteria for Publicly-Funded Vaccines* at:  
[www.manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/vaccineeligibility.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/vaccineeligibility.html)

Just as a reminder, the eligibility criteria for the Pneu-P-23 vaccine and Pneu-C-13 vaccine were updated in 2019, and a frequently asked questions and answers document for health care providers was developed and is available at:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/factsheets/pneumofaq.pdf>

#### **NEW ENHANCED FLU DISTRIBUTION MODEL**

Manitoba is introducing a new, enhanced order and delivery model for the 2022/23 influenza season. Similar to the way physicians and pharmacists currently order their COVID-19 vaccine, the new distribution model is anticipated to increase access to influenza vaccine to all health care providers earlier and also reduce wastage by allowing for increased order frequency throughout the season. In lieu of ordering either via fax or email, providers will be sent a link to an online survey where they will be asked to order enough vaccines for a specified period of time (eg. 2-3 week supply). You can expect to place orders for vaccine on a regular schedule, and receive vaccine shipments on a regular schedule (subject to vaccine manufacturer supply). A link to an online registration form, as well as additional information on how the new distribution model will be

implemented, will be sent in the coming weeks. Registration will be required even for those who have administered the influenza vaccine before, because it will provide us with the necessary information to implement the survey system.

Influenza vaccines are distributed to all Canadian jurisdictions over a period of several weeks to months, starting mid to late September. Any delays from the manufacturers or Health Canada during their regulatory processes can affect the timing of product arriving in Manitoba and shipments to health care providers. We anticipate that the new distribution model, as stated above, will allow for increased efficiency when mitigating delays and shortages of this nature.

All providers/facilities are expected to order based on their anticipated usage for the specified time period in each survey and not for the entire season. **Failure to reconcile vaccine doses ordered and administered as per Manitoba's Immunization Registry may result in providers/facilities receiving fewer doses than ordered.** It is therefore critical that all doses of influenza vaccine that are administered be reported to Manitoba Health. **The provincial goal is for influenza vaccine wastage to be less than 5% at the end of the season.**

Manitoba Health requests that health care providers update their vaccine availability on the COVID-19 & Influenza Vaccine Finder Map (<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/finder.html>) on a weekly basis, at minimum. This will allow Manitoba Health to identify to the public where the influenza vaccine is available.

Historically speaking, manufacturers supplying Canada with influenza vaccine have experienced shortages or delays in the delivery of their vaccines for various reasons, which are beyond the control of the provinces and territories, including Manitoba. As in previous years, health care providers are encouraged to start offering influenza vaccine to their patients as soon as they receive product. **Orders will not be expedited due to failure to ensure sufficient product on hand for scheduled appointments/clinics.**

**All future updates pertaining to influenza vaccine distribution/supply including shortages and delays will be posted online at [www.manitoba.ca/fludistribution](http://www.manitoba.ca/fludistribution) and will also be emailed to providers using the contact information provided at the time of registration.**

Lastly, please take this opportunity to return any unused influenza vaccine from the 2021/22 influenza season to the Provincial Distribution Warehouse using Manitoba Health's Return Policy and Procedure, available at: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/div/docs/vbrpp.pdf>

If you have any questions, please email [vaccines@gov.mb.ca](mailto:vaccines@gov.mb.ca).

Sincerely,



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