

Immunization Services During COVID-19

Attention: Physicians, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Nurse Practitioners, Midwives, Pharmacies, Family Health Teams, Central LHIN, NSM LHIN, Beausoleil First Nation, Rama First Nation, Moose Deer Point First Nation, Wahta First Nation

Date: September 1, 2020

Since March 2020, the measures put in place to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 (e.g. closure of schools and in-person clinic appointments) have affected numerous aspects of immunization in Ontario. While some clinics have continued to provide immunizations, others may have been closed. With fewer vaccines being administered, individuals and communities may be at risk for illness and potential outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases.

To help ensure that our communities remain safe from vaccine preventable diseases and maintain a high level of herd immunity (particularly as businesses, public spaces and schools re-open) the provision of routine immunizations should be considered a high priority. Routine vaccination is an essential service and part of health care provider's standard of care. Immunization can prevent illnesses that lead to unnecessary medical visits, hospitalizations, and future strain to our health care system.

The Ministry of Health has developed the following guidance document for [immunization services during COVID-19](#).¹

This document includes planning guidance for offering immunizations within your clinic including:

- Infection, prevention and control (IPAC) considerations
- COVID-19 guidance for screening patients
- Point of care risk assessment (PCRA)
- Prioritizing your patients requiring immunization
- Provision of catch-up vaccines for missed doses
- General timing of vaccine administration
- Eligibility of vaccines that are age-based or grade-based vaccines

We encourage all health care providers to resume/continue offering vaccines to all individuals as they are able.

If you have any questions, please contact the Immunization program at 705-721-7520 ext. 8806 during regular business hours (Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.).

¹ <https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/docs/default-source/jfy-health-care-professionals/200827-immunization-services-during-covid-19-08-26-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=0>

