

Dr. Charles Gardner, Medical Officer of Health
Dr. Colin Lee, Associate Medical Officer of Health
Dr. Lisa Simon, Associate Medical Officer of Health

COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #49

Updated Local Priority Groups Eligible for Walk-ins; Boosters for Education and Child Care Staff and Those Who Are Pregnant; and Availability of Viral Vector Vaccines

Attention: Physicians, Emergency Departments, Hospital CEOs, Hospital Laboratories, Infection Control Practitioners, Occupational Health Practitioners, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Nurse and Nurse Practitioners, EMS, Designated Officers, Midwives, Family Health Teams, Pharmacies, Central LHIN, NSM LHIN, Beausoleil First Nation, Moose Deer Point First Nation, Rama First Nation, Wahta First Nation, Long-term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Hospices, Coroners, Funeral Directors, Dentists, Group Homes, Homes for Special Care, Optometrists, Corrections, Municipalities, Licensed Child Care Providers

Date: January 7, 2022

The local priority groups eligible for walk-ins at health unit community clinics has been expanded to include Simcoe Muskoka residents in the following groups:

- First doses for age 5+ and second doses for age 12+
- Boosters for the following provided they are at least 3 months (84 days) from their second dose:
 - 40 years of age and older
 - Those with highest risk health conditions who have not yet received their 3rd dose / booster dose which includes:
 - Organ transplant recipients and individuals awaiting organ transplant
 - Hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients
 - Neurological diseases in which respiratory function may be compromised (e.g., motor neuron disease, myasthenia gravis, multiple sclerosis)
 - Haematological malignancy diagnosed <1 year
 - Kidney disease eGFR < 30
 - Individuals who are pregnant at time of vaccination
 - Education and childcare staff including educators, custodial staff, administrative staff, and school bus drivers who are age 18+
 - Health care workers and designated essential caregivers in congregate settings (including long-term care home and retirement home staff and designated caregivers) who are age 16+
 - Those who received two doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine or one dose of the Janssen vaccine, age 18+
 - First Nation, Inuit and Métis adults and their non-Indigenous household members, age 16+



Our clinic appointment capacity in the provincial vaccine appointment booking system continues to be near fully booked at this time. We will be adding more appointments for dates later in January and February in the coming weeks, but in the meantime, we encourage those in the priority groups listed above to take advantage of our Simcoe Muskoka resident only clinics (appointments available on the health unit [website](#)) or by utilizing our walk-in strategy. We are utilizing a same day ticket system so that people won't have to wait in lines.

Boosters for Education and Child Care Staff

On Thursday, the [province announced](#) that dedicated clinics will be held at the International Centre in Mississauga for education staff including educators, custodial staff, administrative staff, and school bus drivers, and child care staff. The clinic will operate seven days a week, with specific appointments being made available for education and child care staff from 4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eligible individuals are encouraged to book their appointment through the Provincial Vaccine Booking Line at 1-833-943-3900.

With our community clinics already fully booked through January, we will try to accommodate education and childcare staff as walk-ins and through designated appointments available on our health unit website specifically for Simcoe Muskoka residents in the priority groups outlined earlier.

Boosters for Pregnant Individuals

The CMOH released a memo earlier this week encouraging those caring for pregnant individuals to strongly encourage their patients to get vaccinated, including their booster dose, to prevent risk of severe outcomes with Omicron. Those who are pregnant are also eligible to receive their booster dose at three months after their last dose. Additional information and resources on [COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy](#) is available on the Government of Ontario website.

Viral Vector Vaccine Available in Limited Supply

For those people who cannot receive due to contraindication or who are fully informed but choose not to receive mRNA vaccine, the province does currently have a limited supply of both Janssen COVID-19 vaccine and AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. To reduce vaccine wastage, the health unit will hold clinics based on demand for these vaccines. Those who want to receive one of these vaccines should visit the health unit website and complete [a request form](#) to have their name added to the list, and health unit staff will contact them to book an appointment when we have enough clients to utilize a full vial.

Additional COVID-19 Vaccine Information

For more information about the rollout of COVID-19 vaccine in our area, please refer to the SMDHU [COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunization](#) webpages.

There are a number of COVID-19 resources and documents available through our Health Professional Portal at www.smdhu.org/hpportal as well as through [Public Health Ontario](#) and the [Government of Ontario](#).