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Plans for Student Immunization Record Review in 2024

Attention: Physicians, Emergency Departments, Hospital Laboratories, Infection Control Practitioners, Occupational Health Practitioners, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Nurse and Nurse Practitioners, Family Health Teams, Pharmacies, Ontario Health Central, Indigenous Health Care & Community, Long-term Care Homes, Retirement Homes

Date: December 13, 2023

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) is continuing efforts to update student immunization records as per the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA). **There are currently no plans to implement further suspensions for any students for the remainder of the 2023/2024 school year**, however notices will continue to be sent to those who we do not have up to date records on file with the health unit to continue catch up efforts and ensure students are protected.

Students who Missed their Grade 7 School Immunization Program Vaccines Due to Pandemic

Catch up efforts have been made to reach all students who were impacted by school closures for their Grade 7 school program vaccines (Hepatitis B, Meningococcal, and HPV). The cohorts impacted by pandemic school closures include:

- 2007 - in Grade 7 in 2019/20 school year when the health unit was only able to visit for round one.
- 2008 - the health unit was unable to visit when they were in Grade 7 or Grade 8.
- 2009 - were in Grade 8 in 2022/2023 when school program resumed. Were offered Grade 7 vaccines in Grade 8 but series completion rates remain lower than average.

Despite these efforts, coverage rates for these vaccines remain low especially for students born in 2008 (currently in Grade 10). While Hepatitis B and HPV vaccines are not required under the ISPA, they are very important cancer prevention vaccines, and we want to ensure that students are aware they are eligible and receive their full series to ensure their best protection.

The health unit will be mailing letters starting in mid-December to students born in 2008 who have not received or completed their Grade 7 program vaccines and continue offering additional catch-up clinics for these students. We will also continue to make these vaccines available to primary care providers to order on a client specific basis. To order please use the High School Student Hep B & HPV Vaccine Catch Up Order Form available on our health care provider website at www.smdhu.org/hpportal.

Elementary Student Record Review Schedule

View all Public Health Alert bulletins at the Health Professionals Portal

www.smdhu.org/HPPortal



Subscribe to urgent health email communications (E.g., Public Health Alert) by registering at www.smdhu.org/PHAlert

Record review efforts for the remainder of this school year and the 2024/2025 school year will focus on children born in 2013, 2014, & 2015. Reminder notices will be mailed home in January and February to students in these cohorts whose immunization record on file at the health unit is not up to date. These families will receive additional notices throughout the year, with suspension of these cohorts planned for February 2025.

High School Student Record Review Schedule

Record review efforts for the 2024/2025 school year will focus on students born in 2007 & 2008. Students born in 2008 may receive reminder notices as part of the Grade 7 school program catch up initiative above in January so if you see students in this cohort for their HB, HPV and Men-C-ACWY please note their vaccination status for Tdap and provide this vaccine as well.

Reminder notices specific to ISPA vaccines will be mailed home to students whose immunization record on file at the health unit is not up to date born in 2007 & 2008 in June 2024. For students who do not respond, suspension is planned for December 2024.

You may notice an increase in families booking appointments to receive vaccines, so please increase your vaccine orders accordingly.

Important!

When you provide immunizations to school age children in your practice, be sure to remind parents that they need to report this information to the health unit so that their child's record on file can be updated. Through our immunization surveillance process, we find many children have received the vaccines, but they just have not reported the information to the health unit. Ensuring that patients know to report the information to the health unit at the time the vaccines are received, will prevent them from receiving notifications from us years later and having to contact your practice to obtain the information needed to update their record.

Parents can access our online reporting system 24/7 at www.smdhu.org/immsonline to report their child's vaccinations, or by calling Health Connection Monday to Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.