

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Communicable Disease Control, Immunization Program Provincial Partner Oversight Team

The Alberta Health Services (AHS) Provincial Partner Oversight (PPO) Team supports seniors congregate care facilities in Alberta in providing annual influenza and COVID-19 immunization for residents and staff, and pneumococcal immunization to eligible residents. The PPO Team operates under the AHS Communicable Disease Control Program and is staffed by Registered Nurses with expertise in immunization.

## Supporting influenza, COVID-19 and pneumococcal immunization in seniors congregate care facilities

### 1. What are the responsibilities of the PPO Team?

- Collaborate with seniors congregate care facilities to ensure residents and staff have access to outreach immunization services.
- Support facilities with establishing immunization providers which may include on site RN/LPN staff (for facilities that are registered vaccine providers) or other community providers (e.g., pharmacies).
- Provide Alberta Health with information collected from facilities (e.g., immunization service provider, number of residents and staff [including age over or under 65 years]) to facilitate vaccine allocations.
- Provide support and direction to facilities prior to and during the outreach immunization program.

### 2. What congregate care facilities are eligible for the Alberta Outreach Immunization Program?

- The Outreach Immunization Program is for seniors congregate care facilities that have more than 10 beds. This includes:
  - Long-term Care (LTC)
  - Designated Supportive Living (DSL)
  - Non-Designated Supportive Living (NDSL)

### 3. What is the role of Congregate Care Facility Operators and Facility Staff?

- Ensure immunization services for residents and staff are in place.
- Complete and submit the AHS PPO Outreach Immunization Survey with required information within specified timelines.
- Please read the [Alberta Outreach Immunization Program policy](#) which further defines roles and responsibilities.

# Frequently Asked Questions

- Please note that according to this policy, at minimum, immunization services must be offered to residents and staff at least 3 times between the beginning of October (as vaccine is available) and February 15, 2024.

## 4. What about influenza and COVID-19 immunization for congregate care staff?

- Operators are encouraged to make influenza and COVID-19 immunization available to all staff working on site, including frontline nursing, housekeeping, office administrative staff, dietary, maintenance and anyone else who works in the congregate care facility.
- Facilities will be required to complete the PPO Outreach Immunization Survey providing numbers of staff (divided into over 65 years and age and under 65 years of age) that require immunization.

## 5. Is there any cost associated with Providers offering vaccines on site?

- Facilities would need to enquire with the Provider whether there is any fee associated with their service.

## Immunization information

### 1. How will information be gathered about who will be immunizing in our facility?

- A PPO Outreach Immunization Survey will be utilized to gather required information. The survey will be emailed to the Director of Care for each facility.

### 2. When is the deadline to submit the PPO Outreach Immunization Survey to the PPO Team?

- Facilities **must** submit the completed survey to the PPO Team with their provider information and required doses for both staff and residents by **July 26, 2023**.
- This deadline ensures appropriate allocation and distribution of vaccine doses across the province. It also provides time to plan immunization services if a facility is unable to find a pharmacy or on-site provider.

### 3. Are there resources to assist with organizing a successful on site clinic?

- The PPO Webpage has links to helpful resources:
  - Resource for Registered Vaccine Providers
  - Resource for External Providers

### 4. How do we access vaccines if we are immunizing on site?

- Facilities that have immunized in-house previously will follow the same process used in previous years.

# Frequently Asked Questions

- Facilities that will provide immunization for the first time with on-site LPNs/RNs need to contact [CDClmm@ahs.ca](mailto:CDClmm@ahs.ca) by July 26, 2023, to begin the process to become a vaccine provider.

## 5. Who do we contact if we have problems with our vaccine supply?

- If you are immunizing your own staff and residents, contact your [Zone Influenza Contact](#).
- If you are working with a Community Pharmacy or other community provider for outreach immunization services, please reach out to them with any questions.

## 6. Who do we contact if we have questions regarding the outreach immunization program?

- You can contact the PPO Team for resources or direction regarding finding an immunization provider.
- Clinical questions regarding immunization should be directed to [CDClmm@ahs.ca](mailto:CDClmm@ahs.ca).

## 7. How do I report an Adverse Event Following Immunization (AEFI)?

- Health practitioners who become aware of an adverse event following immunization are responsible to report to AHS using the AHS Central AEFI Reporting Line at either:
- **1-855-444-2324** (1-855-444-CDCI) OR
- online at [Adverse Event Following Immunization Reporting](#)

## 8. How do we report Cold Chain Excursion?

- A cold chain excursion or 'break' is reported when vaccines have been exposed to light or when vaccine is exposed to temperatures outside of the recommended range of +2°C to +8°C. A cold chain excursion can reduce the effectiveness of the vaccine.
- Registered vaccine providers storing vaccines on site must report temperature excursions below +2°C or above +8°C or light exposures to their Zone Contact by using the reporting process outlined on the [AHS Vaccine Storage and Handling webpage](#)

## Additional Resources

All health practitioners should review the following resources prior to the outreach immunization season, available in September 2023:

- [Influenza Immunization for Health Professionals | Alberta Health Services](#)
- [COVID-19 Health Professional Immunization Information | Alberta Health Services](#)

**For more information about PPO Team supports for seniors congregate care outreach immunization, contact the PPO team at:**

- [congregatelivingimmsupport@ahs.ca](mailto:congregatelivingimmsupport@ahs.ca) or
- [1-855-444-2324](tel:1-855-444-2324)