



Message from
Dr. Laura McDougall
Senior Medical Officer of Health



COVID-19 Immunization Update

Please print and share with your teams as needed

Dear staff, physicians and volunteers,

Please find the enclosed COVID-19 immunization update. Information is also available on our [COVID-19 website](#), and will be consolidated in the regular Friday staff emails.

Today's Update

- **Progress to Date**
- **More Vaccine Arriving in Alberta**
- **Update on Satellite Immunization Clinics**
- **Reminder: Use the COVID-19 Online Immunization Booking Tool**
- **Even if You're Immunized, You Still Need to Follow Public Health Guidance**
- **Complete your "Got My COVID-19 Immunization Form"**
- **COVID-19 Vaccine Safety**

Progress to Date

As of 12 p.m. January 6, more than 31,000 Albertans have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine, including:

- 14,000+ Healthcare workers
- 10,500+ Long Term Care (LTC) and Designated Supportive Living (DSL) staff
- 6,000+ LTC/DSL residents

More Vaccine Arriving in Alberta

More than 13,600 additional doses of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine have arrived in Alberta as of January 6 and we expect additional doses of both Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and Moderna vaccine to arrive next week. As new product arrives, it will be distributed across the province as we work to immunize as many Albertans against COVID-19 as quickly as possible.

Update on Satellite Immunizations Clinics

This week, AHS and Covenant Health began piloting a program to bring temporary satellite COVID-19 immunization clinics to some Emergency Departments throughout the province to help support already booked immunization clinics on

the ground. These satellite clinics will increase opportunities for eligible Emergency Department staff and physicians to be immunized during this phase of the sequenced COVID-19 immunization rollout.

Given existing pressures in acute care settings, this pilot will evaluate the effectiveness of administering immunizations within acute care settings rather than requiring frontline staff to travel to immunization sites. AHS will continually assess the logistics of vaccine transport, site set-up, and the staffing and delivery model for the vaccine and will explore options for further expansion. As more vaccine becomes available, all staff and physicians will have the opportunity to be immunized.

Reminder: Use the COVID-19 Online Immunization Booking Tool

On January 4, AHS launched an online booking tool to make it easier for eligible staff and physicians to book their COVID-19 immunization appointments.

Healthcare workers who are deemed eligible to receive the COVID-19 immunization during this phase of the rollout will have received an email with a link, unique to only them, to go online and book their appointment to get immunized. Once the appointment is booked using that link, the link is expired.

All eligible staff are encouraged to check their email and look for one from AHS Booking titled COVID-19 Immunization Booking. Here is where you'll find the unique link to your appointment and you can choose your preferred time, date and location to receive your immunization. After booking your appointment, you may change the appointment time or date within the allowable date range for the second dose.

Please go in to book your appointments as soon as possible. Thousands of staff are waiting to be immunized and we want to ensure that all available immunization appointments and vaccine doses are filled and used as quickly as possible. Vaccines are a critical way to limit the spread of the virus. They are effective and safe.

Even if You're Immunized, You Still Need to Follow Public Health Guidance Including Use of PPE

Currently, there is insufficient evidence on the duration of protection and effectiveness of the vaccine in reducing transmission of COVID-19. While the vaccines being delivered have shown very high effectiveness in clinical trials, no vaccines are 100 per cent protective. Immunized healthcare workers are still required to adhere to existing PPE guidance, including continuous masking, continuous eye protection, and IPC recommendations for COVID-19. Healthcare workers who are close contacts of cases of COVID-19 will still need to isolate for 14 days. Learn more [here](#).

Complete your "Got My COVID-19 Immunization Form"

There's a new online "Got My COVID-19 Immunization Form" for staff or physicians who have received their COVID-19 immunization. The online form is now available

on [Insite](#). It's important that employees report their immunization status after receiving their second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

COVID-19 Vaccine Safety

Vaccines are a critical way to limit the spread of the virus. They are effective and safe. After a thorough review conducted by Health Canada of the evidence around the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines, Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 and Moderna COVID-19, have received approval for use in Canada.

Vaccine safety is monitored on an ongoing basis. Millions of doses of vaccine have now been administered, without any suggestion of serious effects, and this monitoring continues.

Pregnant, breastfeeding and immunosuppressed individuals were not included in the vaccine clinical trials to date. As such, while recommendations for people in these groups cannot be certain, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization ([NACI](#)) [has recommended](#) that individuals in these groups should work with their healthcare team to assess the benefits along with potential risks.

Many professional societies (e.g., [Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology](#), and [Canadian Rheumatology Association](#)) are recommending, based on their review of the evidence and review of usual practice for other vaccines, that most individuals in these groups should receive the vaccine. More information will be coming shortly to help inform discussions between providers and patients.

For more information about COVID-19 vaccines, common side effects and recommendations on use, please visit [NACI's website](#). Please see the [AHS vaccine website](#) for ongoing updates as they become available.

Over the last week, many teams across AHS have made extraordinary efforts to provide immunization clinics to eligible staff and physicians and advance the vaccination of residents in continuing care. North, Central and South Zone Public Health as well as Health Link staff have been working hard to call eligible staff and physicians directly.

I'd like to thank each and every one of you for your continued efforts. They are so appreciated and we could not do this work without you.

Sincerely,

Dr. Laura McDougall

Senior Medical Officer of Health



Healthy Albertans.
Healthy Communities.
Together.

