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From the Office of Dr. Joyce Lock, Medical Officer of Health, Southwestern Public Health

Update to the Ontario Publicly Funded Shingles (Herpes Zoster) Immunization Program – TRANSITION TO SHINGRIX® from ZOSTAVAX II®

Since September 2016, Ontario has offered seniors aged 65 – 70 years of age a one-time publicly funded dose of vaccine to protect against the Herpes Zoster (HZ) through the publicly funded immunization program. The product used since 2016 has been Zostavax II®.

Current evidence and expert opinion indicate that Shingrix® is more effective for preventing HZ infection and related complications. Shingrix's efficacy is above 90% for HZ incidence and 88-91% for the prevention of post-herpetic neuralgia. It also demonstrates slower waning immunity.

Shingrix is a safe vaccine with rarely reported serious adverse events.

Starting in early November, the Ontario publicly funded immunization program will transition from the Zostavax II vaccine to the Shingrix vaccine.

- **YOUR CURRENT SUPPLY OF ZOSTAVAX II IS DUE TO EXPIRE OCTOBER 21, 2020.**

Shingrix is a recombinant series with the 2nd dose given 2-6 months after the first dose.

Ontario seniors aged 65 – 70 years of age (from the 65th birthday to the day prior to the 71st birthday) are eligible for the 2-dose Shingrix series provided they HAVE NOT received publicly funded Zostavax II.

- Note: As a result of COVID-19, seniors born in 1949 or 1950 (70-year old turning 71 in 2020 or 2021 calendar year) who missed receiving publicly funded Zostavax II are eligible to receive Shingrix vaccine and complete their 2-dose series by December 31st, 2021.

Seniors aged 65-70 years of age who purchased the Zostavax II vaccine are eligible to receive a publicly funded Shingrix vaccine series.

ACTIONS:

- Refer to the attached Shingrix Patient Information Sheet and the Health Care Provider Q&A documents.
- Order Shingrix vaccine starting October 19, 2020 using the updated routine order form on our website or in-office tear-off pads.
- Complete a SWPH Vaccine return form (<https://www.swpublichealth.ca/professionals/health-care->

- [providers/vaccine-ordering-fridge-inspection](#)) and return all unused doses of Zostavax II to SWPH.
- Educate patients regarding the **2-dose schedule** for Shingrix to promote adherence.
 - Educate patients regarding short-term reactogenicity of Shingrix vaccine to promote adherence to 2-dose schedule. Local reactions may occur and are common after first dose.

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