

# COVID-19 Immunization Update

For Health Care Providers in Oxford County, Elgin County,  
and the City of St. Thomas



Week of February 1, 2021

## An Update from Dr. Joyce Lock, Medical Officer of Health

*Please share with staff as appropriate.*

### **REMINDER: SWPH COVID-19 Vaccination Weekly e-Newsletter**

- Southwestern Public Health requires all health care providers and organizations to sign up for our weekly COVID-19 immunization e-newsletter updates. This is the primary way immunization information will be shared across the region. If you have not already signed up, please do so here: <http://eepurl.com/hnoSX5>.
- *Please note: we are legally obliged to request opt-in for this e-newsletter.*

### **What You Need to Know this Week:**

- On January 29, SWPH completed all first dose vaccinations for eligible residents in identified high-risk retirement homes across the region. Second dose vaccinations are now underway for eligible long-term care home residents who received their first dose. It is anticipated that second doses for long-term care home residents will be complete by February 17, at which time SWPH will begin administering second doses in eligible high-risk retirement home residents. SWPH has secured enough vaccine inventory to complete all second doses for individuals who have received their first dose already. Read the full news release: <https://www.swpublichealth.ca/en/news/swph-completes-first-dose-vaccinations-in-high-risk-retirement-home-residents.aspx>.
- SWPH has received confirmation that the Ministry of Health will ensure the Western Fair Agriplex is supplied with enough vaccine to complete second dose vaccinations for all health care workers and essential caregivers who received their first dose in January. The Western Fair Agriplex will resume operations on Monday, February 8, and will be contacting these individuals to rebook second dose appointments within the 42-day interval.
- Update from the Regional COVID-19 Vaccine Prioritization Advisory Committee – February 3, 2021 (enclosed)
- Presently, SWPH has access only to Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, which must be stored at ultra-low temperature. This limits the reach of SWPH's current vaccination plan to those residing in congregate settings.

Southwestern Public Health  
[www.swpublichealth.ca](http://www.swpublichealth.ca)  
1-800-922-0096



- SWPH has received a freezer that is capable of storing the Moderna vaccine at -25°C and is awaiting news of the delivery of an ultra-low temperature freezer that will allow us to receive and store Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine more locally.
- News Release: Ontario Continues Accelerated Vaccinations of Most Vulnerable Despite Vaccine Delays  
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/60208/ontario-continues-accelerated-vaccinations-of-most-vulnerable-despite-vaccine-delays>



## **MEMO: Update on Regional Prioritization of COVID-19 Vaccine**

February 2, 2021

Huron Perth Public Health, Middlesex-London Health, and Southwestern Public Health will provide regular updates on the eligibility criteria for recipients of the COVID-19 vaccine in their respective regions.

The Ministry of Health, through the guidance of the provincial COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force, directs the allocation of the vaccine. Vaccine supply differs by region. Given scarce vaccine supply, a regional **COVID-19 Vaccine Prioritization Advisory Committee** has been struck to help inform the public health units decisions regarding further prioritization when necessary. For more information on the COVID-19 Vaccine Prioritization Advisory Committee, please visit the Middlesex-London Health Unit website at [www.healthunit.com](http://www.healthunit.com).

### **Supply Constraints Update**

The only product currently available in the region is the Pfizer-BioNtech COVID-19 vaccine. A small amount of additional product did arrive the week of February 1, 2021, and additional shipments are anticipated in subsequent weeks. However, **the need for further prioritization within the confines of the provincial direction remains.**

### **Current Provincial Direction on Prioritization**

On January 25, 2021 the province [directed](#) that all first doses must be prioritized for residents of long-term care, high-risk retirement, and First Nations elder care homes. Huron Perth Public Health, Middlesex-London Health, and Southwestern Public Health have provided a first of vaccine to all eligible individuals in these groups.

### **Additional Regional Direction on Prioritization**

Given provincial direction and the limited number of doses that are available regionally, only the following people are eligible to receive the first dose of the vaccine. Eligibility will be reviewed weekly and will be dependent on vaccine supply and Provincial direction.

**Most vaccines delivered in the region in the next week will be second doses.**

#### **ELIGIBLE FOR FIRST-DOSE:**

- Long-term care home residents, as defined by the Ministry of Long-Term Care
- High-risk retirement homes residents, as defined by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility
  - Co-located with long-term care homes
  - Containing a memory unit
  - Identified as Red or Yellow by the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA)

### **ELIGIBLE FOR END-OF-DAY DOSES**

At the end of each clinic, there may be a small amount of additional vaccine available that is to be used to avoid wastage.

#### **Eligible for additional vaccine available at end-of-day during a mobile clinic, in the following order:**

1. Long-term care or high-risk retirement home staff\*, first dose
2. Long-term care or high-risk retirement home staff\*, second dose if appropriate
3. Essential caregiver

#### **Eligible for additional vaccine available at end-of-day at the Western Fair Agriplex, in the following order:**

1. Long-term care or high-risk retirement home staff\*, first dose
2. Long-term care or high-risk retirement home staff\*, second dose if appropriate
3. All other individuals who are due for a second dose
4. Immunizers of the COVID-19 vaccine, first dose
  - a. Immunizers are vaccinated to limit the potential for transmission between facilities when the mobile clinics are deployed

\* LHIN, Hospital, Primary Care and Paramedic Services staff who are directly providing on-site support to long-term care and retirement homes in outbreak, and have committed to a week or more of attending the facility, are considered as long-term care or high-risk retirement home staff.

### **NOT CURRENTLY ELIGIBLE FOR FIRST-DOSE**

No other individuals are currently eligible for the vaccine in this region. This includes the following exclusions:

- Individuals with active respiratory symptoms.
- Independent living facilities, seniors' apartments, hospice sites, and adult day programs.
- Healthcare workers not explicitly listed in the eligible groups.

### **SECOND-DOSE SCHEDULE**

Consistent with the provincial direction, to maximize the number of individuals benefiting from a first dose of Pfizer-BioNtech vaccine by delaying the second dose until further supplies of the vaccine become available.

#### **Given the scarce vaccine supply, the Province has directed the following:**

- All second doses for residents of long-term care, retirement and First Nations elder care homes will be delivered at 21-27 days after their first dose.
- All second-doses for all other groups will be rescheduled up to 42 days after their first dose.

#### **Update on Western Fair Agriplex Clinic**

The Western Fair Agriplex Clinic will be re-opening on Monday, February 8, 2021 to deliver second doses to individual who are not residents of long-term care, retirement and First Nations elder care homes. Individuals will be contacted shortly and notified of their new appointment time.