

COVID-19 Immunization Update

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



September 23, 2021

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

Please share with staff as appropriate.

What You Need to Know This Week

1. VACCINATION POLICIES RECOMMENDED AT WORKPLACES

- On September 20, Dr. Joyce Lock, Medical Officer of Health, [recommended all workplaces establish a vaccination policy](#) to protect their workers and the public from COVID-19.
- This is recommended for **all businesses and organizations** in Elgin County, Oxford County, and the City of St. Thomas.
- **ACTION:** If you need support establishing a vaccination strategy, visit www.swpublichealth.ca/WorkplaceCOVID19 for guidance and a policy template to adapt for your workplace.

2. PROOF OF VACCINATION FOR SPECIFIC SETTINGS IN ONTARIO

- On September 22, Ontario's proof of vaccination for specific settings came into effect.
- Not all workplaces are mandated under this provincial order.
- Refer to the [FAQ](#) and [Guidance for Applicable Settings](#) for full details.

3. REMINDER: MEDICAL VACCINATION EXEMPTIONS

- Due to [Directive #6](#), primary care providers may receive requests for notes to document medical exemptions for COVID-19 vaccination. **Medical exemptions are expected to be infrequent and should be supported by expert consultation.**
- If you have patients that wish to decline vaccination for a non-medical reason, please be aware that there are no COVID-19 vaccine exemption affidavits for adults.
- At present, there is no standardized form that needs to be used to document an individual's medical exemption.
- Additional guidance and resources related to COVID-19 immunization doctors' notes are available from the [Ontario Medical Association](#) and [the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.](#)

4. BEGIN PREPARATION FOR 5-11 YEAR OLD VACCINATIONS

- Anticipated Health Canada approval in late November or early December.
- Although this age cohort is not yet eligible for vaccination, the Province has indicated all regions begin preparations to welcome this cohort soon.
- **ACTION:** Public health units, pharmacy, and primary care are all advised to consider creative clinics and opportunities to reach this population when the time comes.

5. SWPH REGION VACCINATION RATES

- Data from the Ministry of Health as of September 21:
 - Percentage of SWPH 12+ population with at least one dose: 84.8%
 - Percentage of SWPH 12+ population with both doses: 79.1%
- Pregnant women remain a priority population for increased vaccination rates, as well as vulnerable populations including homeless and underhoused, and individuals who misuse substances.
- **ACTION:** Contact [Susan Maclsaac](#) if you have a recommended opportunity for pop-up or mobile clinics.

6. INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION UPDATE

- On September 21, SWPH [issued an update](#) on the Universal Influenza Immunization Program (UIIP) for the 2021-22 season.
- Included is the notice that a start-up supply of vaccine will be available for pick-up on or after October 7 for high-risk individuals **only**; vaccine for the general public will be available (pending shipment from the Ministry of Health) starting the week of October 18 (pick ups available October 21st and 22nd).
- Access the influenza vaccine order form here: https://www.swpublichealth.ca/en/partners-and-professionals/resources/Health-Care-Providers/Influenza/HCP-order-form-combined-2021-09-21_.pdf
- For influenza updates for health care providers and pharmacy teams, subscribe to: <https://www.swpublichealth.ca/en/partners-and-professionals/influenza-information-for-health-care-providers.aspx>