

COVID-19 Immunization Update

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



Week of March 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 March 1, the following groups were added to the eligibility for COVID-19 vaccine in our region:
 - Frontline healthcare workers working in hospital inpatient settings and hospital procedural areas, including surgical care, anesthesia, obstetrics, endoscopy, operating rooms, dialysis, imaging, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy. Other ambulatory and out-patient care areas are not included at this time.
 - Residents and staff in other congregate care settings for seniors, including assisted living facilities.
 - Adults 80 years of age and older (born in 1941 or earlier)
 - Indigenous adults 55 years of age and older (born in 1966 or earlier). Eligible individuals must self-identify as Indigenous when presenting at clinic.
 - Indigenous adults 16 years of age and older living on-reserve. Eligible only at on-reserve clinics.

All previously identified groups remain eligible. For a complete list of eligibility groups, visit www.swpublichealth.ca/covid19vaccine.

- Read the latest [Regional COVID-19 Vaccine Prioritization Advisory Committee update](#).

Southwestern Public Health
www.swpublichealth.ca
1-800-922-0096



- Southwestern Public Health has confirmed a local allocation of the PfizerBioNTech vaccine will arrive in-region the week of March 15.
- On March 3, Southwestern Public Health publicly announced the sites of its local COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics in Elgin-St. Thomas and Oxford. Set to open the week of March 15, Southwestern Public Health will offer one main vaccination site in each county – St. Thomas-Elgin Memorial Arena in St. Thomas, and the Community Complex-Goff Hall in Woodstock. Once these two sites are operational and as more vaccine arrives, the health unit will begin work to open additional smaller, mobile clinics to reach those who may have trouble accessing the main sites. [Read the news release](#) for more details.
- Southwestern Public Health will announce details for how to book an appointment at local clinics the week of March 8 for appointments beginning the week of March 15. Details will be communicated widely through social media, our website, and through stakeholder communications to health system and municipal partners across the region. Appointments will be limited to the number of vaccines that SWPH will receive. Our plan is to administer all doses within the week they are received.
- Consent forms have been identified as a potential bottleneck for upcoming local clinics. These forms are required for all appointments to receive vaccine. It is advised that all individuals who have an appointment bring a completed form to the clinic to avoid delays. **Those who anticipate they will want a vaccine do not need to wait to fill out this form – it can be completed now while you await eligibility.**
 - Download and Print: www.swpublichealth.ca/vaccineconsent
 - Southwestern Public Health will soon share a website link for where to find printed copies in the community.
- On March 2, Canada started to receive its first shipment of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. Southwestern Public Health is awaiting direction from the Province for what our local supply will be and when it will arrive. [Read Health Canada's statement](#) for Canadian authorization of this vaccine.
- Earlier this week, Ret. General Rick Hillier led a tabletop exercise with Ontario's public health units as part of planning preparation for viability of vaccination sites at pharmacies. Currently, Ontario has identified pilot sites for pharmacy-based clinics in Kingston, Toronto, and Windsor.
- The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) has recommended that in the context of limited COVID-19 vaccine supply, jurisdictions should maximize the number of individuals benefiting from the first dose by extending the interval for the second dose by up to four months. [Read the rapid response.](#)