

COVID-19 Immunization Update

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



Week of March 24, 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 will no longer be distributing this e-newsletter via ERMS as of March 29. If you have not yet signed up for this e-newsletter, please do before March 29: <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 24, the following groups were added to the eligibility for COVID-19 vaccine in our region. These groups will be eligible to book an appointment within the next several weeks, depending on appointment availability in the local health unit. Slight variation between health units is anticipated. Please check the website of the local health unit for up-to-date information on who is eligible to book on any given day.

Adults aged 75 or older (born in 1946 or earlier) (as announced on March 19)

Indigenous adults aged 16 or older

Faith leaders who as part of their regular role are at increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 through close contact with persons and families in the following circumstances:

- End of life care
 - Care of the deceased, funerals, bathing, or other ceremony with direct contact with deceased persons
 - Home visits to unwell persons
 - Pastoral care in hospitals, Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, or other vulnerable settings
- 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](#).
 - Everyone is encouraged to be vaccinated **at their earliest eligibility opportunity**. There will be enough vaccine for everyone who wants to be vaccinated when they become eligible.

Southwestern Public Health
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- A reminder that Southwestern Public Health is **not currently enrolled** in the provincial booking system – to book an appointment in Elgin-St. Thomas or Oxford County, please continue to use www.covidvaccinelm.ca or call 226-289-3560 (Monday to Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.).
- Southwestern Public Health continues to receive shipments of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines locally. There is currently no information to share about shipments of any other vaccine brands.
- On March 12, the Ministry of Health updated its [COVID-19 Vaccine Consent Form](#). The previous version of the consent form is still accepted at vaccine clinics. We will provide an updated version on our website for download and printing. **Please continue to distribute any existing printed copies of the previous version you may have and replenish with the new version thereafter.**
- The Centre for Effective Practice includes several updated resources for vaccine efficacy and safety. View the [Vaccines At A Glance](#) comparative chart of all vaccine brands; View the [About the AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson Vaccines](#) patient-facing fact sheet; View the [PrOTCT Framework](#) to encourage patient confidence in vaccines.
- The Centre for Effective Practice also summarizes current international advisories that conclude the AstraZeneca vaccine is not associated with an increase in the overall risk of thromboembolic events (blood clots). Further assessment continues through the European Medicines Agency, the UK Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency, and Health Canada. For reference: [EMA Advisory](#), [UK-MHPRA Advisory](#), [Health Canada Advisory](#).
- On March 18, [Health Canada issued a follow-up statement](#) to its advisory (above) confirming the AstraZeneca vaccine benefits continue to outweigh risks for use in Canada, citing there have been very rare reports in Europe of blood clots associated with low levels of blood platelets (thrombocytopenia).
- On March 22, Ret. General Rick Hiller informed all public health units that vaccine shipments will soon be available for at least three pharmacies in each public health region. Delivery timeline is not yet known.