

**Office of the
Chief Medical
Health Officer**

September 23, 2021

Facilities Influenza Prevention and Control 2021-2022

Dear Director of Care:

Influenza vaccination for staff and residents of long term care facilities is of particular importance this season because of the COVID-19 pandemic- to reduce the risk of respiratory illness overall and prevent outbreaks within facilities. **Please stress the importance of influenza vaccination with all your staff and residents, as well as visitors to facilities this season.**

Please see the Island Health website at <http://www.islandhealth.ca/flu> for information about the 2021 - 2022 Seasonal Influenza Campaign. For long term care specific information click on the “Long Term Care Facilities” button on the webpage.

All vaccine order forms, reporting forms and vaccine information will be online. Additional information about outbreak preparation and management will also be accessible via this website. All COVID-19 protocols and prevention measures should remain in place, as these measures will also reduce the risk of influenza within facilities.

Seasonal influenza vaccine will be delivered to BC in late September/early October. Vaccine will be distributed to long term care facilities as it arrives on Vancouver Island; anticipated distribution to begin **the week of September 27th or as soon as vaccine is available**. Please place your orders for vaccine as soon as possible through your local health unit and plan to **begin vaccinating your residents and staff as soon as vaccine is available** to your facility. Please include Assisted Living in your order if you are able to vaccinate these residents.

Facilities must place the vaccine order for Long Term Care and Assisted Living residents living in the same facility. Facilities that have contracts in place with pharmacists to administer flu vaccine must place their vaccine order and indicate on the form if a pharmacist will be picking up from the health unit on their behalf. Remaining vaccine doses can be stored on site for ongoing administration for staff and residents that were not immunized at the beginning of the season. If remaining doses will not be used by the facility they should be returned to the local health unit under cold chain conditions on the day of the last clinic.

Vaccines and recommended usage:

This season, all publicly funded influenza vaccines are quadrivalent. The influenza vaccine contains strains that have *changed* from last year. The vaccine will contain:

- A/Victoria/2570/2019 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus (NEW strain this year)
- A/Cambodia/e0826360/2020 (H3N2)-like virus (NEW strain this year)
- B/Washington/02/2019 (B/Victoria lineage)-like virus
- B/Phuket/3073/2013 (B/Yamagata lineage)-like virus

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AFTER HOURS ON CALL

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Publicly funded influenza vaccines available for long-term care residents and staff this year include:

Product	Intended Age Group	Product Presentation
Fluzone® High- Dose (Quadrivalent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals ≥ 65 years and older living in long-term care and assisted living facilities • This publicly funded product will be restricted to LTC, Assisted Living and living in First Nations communities only and will not be available through other community vaccine providers. 	*Pre-filled syringe
FluLaval Tetra® (Quadrivalent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents and staff of facilities less than 65 years of age 	Multi-dose vial
FLuZone® (Quadrivalent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents and staff of facilities less than 65 years of age 	*Pre-filled syringe and multi-dose vial
Afluria Tetra® (Quadrivalent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents and staff of facilities less than 65 years of age 	Multi-dose vial (Not available until week of November 8 th)

***Pre-filled syringes take up approximately 10 times as much fridge space as multi-dose vials.**

For the general public, there will be FluMist available for children, in addition to FluLaval, Fluzone and Afluria Tetra. These will be available through pharmacists, physicians and Public Health clinics.

Guidance on Influenza Vaccination Administration during COVID-19 pandemic:

Please review the guidance on the safe administration of influenza vaccine in the BCCDC Immunization Manual (online) or the link below:

http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Epid/CD%20Manual/Chapter%20-%20Imms/Guidance_for_Influenza_Vaccine_Delivery_During_COVID_-19.pdf

If you have a healthcare provider coming into your facility to administer influenza vaccine to your residents, please ensure that they are familiar with and adhering to these guidelines.

Resources for Facilities:

Information documents with more detailed information for long term care facilities will be available on the Island Health Influenza website at the end of September (www.islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/flu-influenza/influenza-information-forms-long-term-care-facilities).

The documents include:

- [Influenza like illness Checklist for Long Term Care](#)
- [Use of Antivirals in Long Term Care Facilities](#)

Order forms and vaccine reference information are also be posted on the Island Health Influenza website.

In health,



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Chief Medical Health Officer



Murray Fyfe, MD, MSc, FRCPC
Medical Health Officer



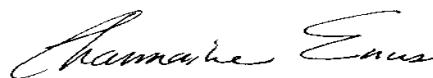
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