
Physician and Nurse Practitioner Update
RE: Fall 2026 Respiratory Immunizations

Influenza activity is increasing earlier than usual in British Columbia, including within Island Health. COVID-19 activity has also increased from summer levels, while respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity remains low. Primary care providers play an important role in supporting respiratory immunization uptake among patients at increased risk of severe disease.

Vaccine Access

- Most people in Island Health will access respiratory immunizations through **pharmacies or Island Health immunization clinics**. Additional vaccination opportunities may be available through hospitals, long-term care and assisted living facilities, First Nations health providers, and community vaccine providers.

Influenza and COVID-19

- Influenza vaccine remains publicly funded and [recommended](#) for everyone ≥ 6 months of age, particularly people at increased risk of severe illness, those who may transmit to individuals at higher risk, and essential service providers.
- COVID-19 vaccine remains available to [all eligible individuals](#) and is **recommended** for individuals at increased risk of severe disease.
- For Influenza and COVID-19 vaccines, invitations through Get Vaccinated begin **October 5**, with immunization appointments beginning **October 13**.

RSV

- **Older Adults:** Publicly funded RSV vaccine is now available for adults 75 years and older and First Nations, Métis and Inuit adults 60 years and older. RSV vaccine is currently considered a one-time immunization and can be administered concurrently with influenza and COVID-19 vaccines. Most [eligible adults](#) can access vaccine through participating pharmacies and other immunization providers.
- **Pregnancy:** RSVpreF vaccine (Abrysvo®) is approved for use during pregnancy (private pay) and should be discussed with eligible pregnant patients. First Nations clients are

Island Health Medical Health Officers

Chief MHO: Dr. Réka Gustafson 250-519-3406; Nanaimo/Oceanside: Dr. Tribesty Nguyen 250-739-6304
Alberni/Clayoquot & Cowichan Region: Dr. Alex Wong 250-737-2020; North Island: Dr. Charmaine Enns 250-331-8591
South Island: Dr. Mark Cachia, Dr. Carol Fenton, Dr. Melissa Wan, Dr. Mike Benusic 250-519-3406
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covered under [expanded First Nations Health Authority coverage](#) for maternal RSV immunization.

- **Infants:** Nirsevimab (Beyfortus®) remains available through the [provincial RSV immunoprophylaxis program](#) for certain eligible infants.

Pneumococcal vaccine

- PCV20 is recommended for [eligible older adults](#) who have not previously received pneumococcal vaccine and for certain individuals with high-risk medical conditions. Consider reviewing pneumococcal immunization status when discussing influenza, COVID-19, or RSV vaccination.

Community Vaccine Providers

- Influenza vaccine will be available to Community Vaccine Providers in early October.
- Healthcare professionals can register as Community Vaccine Providers to order, receive, and administer vaccines to their patients.
- Refer to [Immunization Info for Healthcare Professionals](#) for current guidance.

Supporting Patients to Get Vaccinated

- Please encourage eligible patients to receive recommended respiratory immunizations.
- Patients can access booking information through [Get Vaccinated](#) (1-833-838-2323).
- RSV program information and participating pharmacy lists are available on the [Island Health RSV webpage](#).

More Information:

- [Immunizations | Island Health](#) (for patients)
- [Health Unit Locations | Island Health](#)
- **Note:** If viewing a printed copy, visit the Island Health Immunizations web page for direct links, or search the BCCDC Immunization Manual, Part 4 (Biological Products) for vaccine eligibility