



Message from
Dr. Laura McDougall
Senior Medical Officer of Health



COVID-19 Immunization Update

Please print and share with your teams as needed

Dear staff, physicians and volunteers,

Please find the enclosed COVID-19 immunization update. Information is also available on our [COVID-19 website](#), and will be consolidated in the regular Friday staff emails.

Today's Update

- **By the Numbers**
- **Vaccine Supply Update**
- **Rationale for Expansion of Second Dose Immunization Window**
- **Continuing Care Spotlight – Calgary Zone**
- **Update: Satellite Immunization clinics**
- **Reminder to Eligible Staff & Physicians: Use the COVID-19 Immunization Booking Tool to Book Appointments**
- **CANVAS COVID-19 Vaccine Safety Project**
- **AHS Survey – More Than 3,900 Responses So Far**
- **Questions**

By the numbers

As of 3:10 p.m. January 13, more than 58,900 Albertans received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine, including:

- 24,600+ Healthcare workers
- 19,400+ Long Term Care (LTC) and Designated Supportive Living (DSL) staff
- 18,800+ LTC/DSL residents

Vaccine Supply Update

Additional doses of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine arrived this morning (Jan. 13), bringing the total to more than 24,000 additional doses received so far this week. These doses will be distributed across the province as we work to immunize as many Albertans against COVID-19 as quickly as possible.

Rationale for Expansion of Second Dose Immunization Window

As announced by [Alberta Health](#) on Jan. 12, going forward second doses of the COVID-19 vaccine will be offered within 42 days after the first dose. Increasing the

time from the first dose to the second dose will allow us to use our early limited supply of COVID-19 vaccine to reach more high-risk people sooner with early protection. This aligns with the approach recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI).

If you have already booked your appointment for your second dose, we will honour your appointment. For residents of long term care and designated supportive living facilities, we will continue to offer the shorter interval of 3-4 weeks (21-28 days), as this population is at the highest risk of severe outcomes.

The current COVID-19 vaccines we have in Canada are very effective in preventing COVID-19 illness. Studies on the vaccine show that 14 days after the first dose, on average, 92% of people are protected from getting sick with COVID-19 for the next several weeks.

Studies haven't been done yet on how long protection lasts without a second dose of vaccine, but it is known that antibody levels produced by the first dose do gradually decrease. There is no evidence at this time that shows when protection from one dose would stop. To ensure that protection lasts as long as possible, current evidence indicates it is necessary to have a second dose of vaccine. A second dose will be offered to everyone receiving a first dose in Alberta.

While the vaccine makers recommend the second dose be given 3-4 weeks after the first dose, extending the interval between dose 1 and dose 2 to 6 weeks covers the broadest window of time reported in the trials. For a small number of people in the manufacturers' studies, the second dose was given 42 days or 6 weeks after the first. (Range in actual time between dose 1 and dose 2 for Pfizer was 19-42 days and Moderna was 21-42 days.)

Even if you have had one or two vaccine doses and, as a result, have a much smaller chance of becoming sick with COVID-19, we don't yet know if the vaccine prevents people from spreading the virus. So all [COVID-19 precautions](#) are still required for the next few months at least while we gather more evidence.

Continuing Care Spotlight – Calgary Zone



Today, AHS has reached another milestone in our COVID-19 journey, with the completion of COVID-19 first dose immunization at all continuing care facilities in Calgary Zone. Helen Rhyno, 83, was “delighted” to be one of the more than 7,300 residents immunized against COVID-19 in Calgary.

Thank you to all teams in the Calgary Zone for helping us complete this significant achievement. We are so grateful to all our staff working to immunize vulnerable Albertans across the province.

Update: Satellite Immunization Clinics

AHS and Covenant Health are piloting a program to bring temporary [satellite COVID-19 immunization clinics](#) to some emergency departments throughout the province. These clinics increase opportunities for eligible emergency department staff and physicians to be immunized during this phase of the provincial immunization program. Nine satellite clinics have already taken place, with more than 425 emergency department staff immunized. As more vaccine becomes available, additional clinics will be opened for eligible staff.

Reminder to Eligible Staff & Physicians: Use the COVID-19 Immunization Booking Tool to Book Appointments

We know everyone is anxiously awaiting their turn for immunization and we thank you for your patience. We are doing all we can to continue to push hard to roll out vaccine as supply is available. We are extremely grateful for the patience of all staff, physicians and Albertans who are waiting to be immunized.

We would like to remind all staff and physicians that there is only one online booking tool for COVID-19 immunization appointments. Please do not use the influenza website to book your COVID-19 immunization. COVID-19 vaccine is not provided at influenza immunization clinics.

Staff eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine will receive an email directly from AHS with a unique link. Please use the link provided to book your appointment as soon as possible. Visit the [FAQ page](#) if you have questions about this process.

Please also ensure you attend the immunization site on the date and time you book for your appointment. This will prevent unnecessary lineups and help us to immunize staff as efficiently as possible.

CANVAS COVID-19 Vaccine Safety Project

An important component of all immunization programs is monitoring for safety of each vaccine. The [Canadian National Vaccine Safety Network \(CANVAS\)](#) is working with acute care and public health organizations in several provinces, including Alberta, to determine the safety of COVID-19 vaccines. Led by the ACHIEVE Research Team, in collaboration with AHS and AH, this project will collect information about health events after receiving COVID-19 vaccines using web-based surveys after each vaccine dose and 6 months after both doses. This

information, as well as any reports to [AHS' Adverse Event Following Immunization \(AEFI\) program](#), will provide detailed information to the province about the safety of COVID-19 vaccines and contribute to the national program.

Take the [COVID-19 Vaccine Safety Survey](#).

AHS Survey – More than 3,900 Responses So Far

As of Jan. 12, more than 3,900 participants have completed the AHS COVID-19 Immunization Survey, which is included in the email sent to eligible healthcare workers when booking their COVID-19 immunization. It was also included in the COVID-19 Immunization Update on Jan.11. Preliminary results indicate 87.3% of respondents say they intend to get immunized against COVID-19. We encourage you to participate if you haven't already by [completing the survey](#). Information collected will inform our understanding of healthcare workers' perspectives towards the COVID-19 vaccine and immunization.

Have a Question?

The full list of current vaccine delivery phases is available on the [Alberta Health website](#).

If you have any questions about the vaccine rollout, contact your supervisor or medical leader or see the [Staff FAQ](#). Additional information can be found on [ahs.ca/covidvaccine](#). If your specific question is not addressed, please email AHSVaccineTaskforce@ahs.ca.

Sincerely,

Dr. Laura McDougall

Senior Medical Officer of Health



Healthy Albertans.
Healthy Communities.
Together.

