



Message from Mauro Chies & Dr. Laura McDougall

Immunization Policy Update

Dear staff, physicians, and volunteers

AHS is rescinding the *Immunization of Workers for COVID-19 Policy*, effective July 18, 2022. As a result, workers will no longer be required to be immunized for COVID-19 as a condition of employment.

This applies to all AHS, Covenant Health, Carewest, CapitalCare, and Alberta Precision Laboratories employees, members of the medical and midwifery staff, students and instructors, volunteers, and applicable contracted service providers. In addition, new hires and students will no longer be required to be immunized for COVID-19 upon hire or placement.

While COVID-19 vaccines continue to provide strong protection against serious illness, the decision to rescind the policy is the result of emerging evidence that initial doses of the vaccine as required by the policy have become less protective against infection and transmission. The COVID-19 vaccines available to date target the original strain of the virus and the virus has evolved since then.

The policy came into effect at a time when the immunization required by the policy was highly effective in protecting the health and safety of workers and patients by limiting the spread of COVID-19. Current evidence reveals that immunization without boosters has limited effectiveness in reducing transmission of the Omicron variants currently circulating.

The safety of our healthcare workers and patients is of the utmost importance and effective safety measures remain in place to limit the spread of COVID-19 in our workplaces. Our workforce continues to be required to stay home when sick, wear required personal protective equipment and practice hand hygiene. We will continue to closely monitor scientific evidence to assess the need for additional measures.

We continue to strongly recommend healthcare workers receive COVID-19 immunization and any boosters available to them to reduce the severity of infection

and as part of our overall approach to protect patients and one another. Booster doses enhance the effectiveness of initial doses and help protect against waning immunity.

We are extremely grateful to all healthcare workers who are fully immunized. We would like to thank our key healthcare stakeholders, including our union partners and regulators, for their ongoing support and advocacy for immunization.

Over the coming weeks, we will be updating our policies and processes to reflect this change. We appreciate your understanding and patience as it will take time to update all appropriate resources.

For additional information, please see the [Frequently Asked Questions](#), which will continue to be updated as we implement this change.

Thank you for your dedication, adaptability, and for all you do for each other and Albertans.

Mauro Chies

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