

Influenza Vaccine Campaign 2020-2021: Bulletin #2

The influenza vaccination campaign is now underway. There has been a tremendous amount of interest from community immunizers this season, including new immunizers, and we thank you for immunizing. Much vaccine has already been distributed. We will try to give you as much as you received last year, though filling re-orders may take longer due to an increase in number of immunizers. We thank you for your patience.

Workplace Influenza Clinics organized within VCH geographic area: Due to supply limitations at the start of influenza campaign, we cannot yet share publicly funded influenza vaccine for general worksite clinics. Employees who are eligible for free vaccine can be immunized for free by public health, their physician or at a pharmacy. Please check in with us mid-November to explore if we have publicly funded vaccine available that could be offered to eligible individuals at general worksites. Workplace clinics for health care workers and first responders have already been allotted their supply of vaccine.

Infection control recommendations for mass influenza vaccination clinics:

Screening for COVID-19 infection	Please alert patients at time of booking to symptoms of COVID-19 and advise to rebook if ill; passive screening using signage at the clinic location is acceptable.
Hand hygiene	Everybody should wash/sanitize hands frequently: Patients should sanitize when they enter a clinic and before and after receiving vaccine.
Personal Protective Equipment	PPE may be used for the full duration of a shift but should be replaced after a break. Soiled, wet or damaged masks should be promptly replaced.
Immunizers need:	Medical masks + eye protection. Gloves are only needed for intranasal or orally administered vaccines. Gowns and aprons are not required.
Support staff need:	Medical mask. Eye protection only if cannot maintain a 2 metre distance.
Staff responding to emergencies:	Medical mask, eye protection, gown and gloves should be available to personnel who need to provide first aid or respond to a health emergency.
Cleaning & disinfection	Frequently touched surfaces (e.g., door knobs, light switches, telephones, keyboards, pens, charts, toys, bathrooms) are to be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day. Immunization stations (e.g., chairs, tables) are to be cleaned & disinfected at least twice a day. No table coverings should be used on the immunization preparation surface (e.g., blue pads, table cloths) to ensure ease and efficacy of cleaning. To reduce the need for cleaning in between patients, we emphasize hand hygiene, suggest using chairs without arm rests, and position chairs facing away from the immunization station surface so there is no potential contamination from the client.
Control flow in the clinic	Support physical distancing by using signage to direct flow, appropriate spacing of tables and chairs, and appointment based immunizations.

Shortened observation period following influenza vaccine administration? The National Advisory Committee on Immunization recommends that the 15-minute observation period following influenza vaccination be maintained with attention to physical distancing. A shorter observation period of 5 minutes or more *may be considered* when volume of clients and space available in waiting rooms precludes appropriate physical distancing. Reduced observation period may be considered for clients who have received influenza vaccine before, do not have a history of severe allergic reaction to the influenza vaccine or its components or severe immediate reaction to any vaccine (e.g., syncope), agree to stay in the vicinity of the clinic (e.g., parking lot) for a total of 15 minutes post immunization with another responsible adult, do not operate a transportation device, and know when and how to seek post-vaccination advice.