

HPMVAC update: March 25, 2021

Current Vaccination Status in Huron-Perth

- Vaccine supply has improved but continues to be limited, requiring continued prioritization. For Huron Perth, prioritization is done at a regional level between Huron Perth Public Health, Middlesex London Health Unit and Southwestern Public Health.
- Pfizer-BioNtech is the COVID-19 vaccine available in the region currently for mass vaccination clinics.
- A very limited supply of Moderna vaccine has been distributed to Huron Perth Primary Care Providers to vaccinate eligible populations. Primary care is calling patients for Moderna vaccine appointments and are asking their patients to please not call their clinic for appointments.
- Significant progress has been made in vaccinating eligible recipients in the provincial Phase One population
- Over 13,000 doses of vaccine have been administered in Huron-Perth. We have ramped up to administering > 5000 doses per week in accordance with current inventory, and we can accommodate more vaccine should it become available.
 - Public Health Ontario reports that as of March 20:
 - 8.9% of H-P residents have received at least 1 dose (provincial average 8.2%)
 - 2.3% of H-P residents have completed the vaccination series (provincial average 2.0%)
 - (source: COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in Ontario: December 14, 2020 to March 20, 2021 | Public Health Ontario)
 - We anticipate being ready to proceed with Phase 2 in early April in alignment with the Provincial Plan.
 - Huron-Perth is using all of our vaccine inventory. Please note that the province aims to achieve a balanced and equitable distribution of vaccines to all public health units, but these rates may vary over time due to changes in expected shipments from the federal government.
 - Given the limited supply of vaccines to date, the province has focused on protecting the most vulnerable populations and those with the greatest risk of illness and death – residents of long-term care, high risk retirement and First Nations elder care homes, as well as frontline health care workers, long-term care staff, essential caregivers, and remote Indigenous communities.
 - Some public health units will also receive additional doses to target historic and ongoing hot spots with high rates of death, hospitalization and transmission; Huron-Perth is not in an area of high transmission and does not have a defined Indigenous Community.
 - This means that there are some differences across public health units: some have been able to add more eligible groups than Huron-Perth, while others have not been able to reach as many eligible groups as we have. Some have seen less vaccine uptake in certain communities. We have been very fortunate in Huron Perth to have such an enthusiastic response from the community.

Please know that HPPH, along with all Public Health Units in Ontario, are working non-stop to get as many vaccines administered as possible.

- As vaccine delivery and availability stabilizes, future allocations will be more in line with the population of each health unit, and in alignment with the provincial Ethical Framework.
- In keeping with provincial direction, Huron Perth Public Health continues to maintain the time interval for second doses of COVID-19 vaccines at 16 weeks, allowing more first doses to be administered. Not all second doses are being extended. The following groups will continue to receive their second dose of vaccine between 21 to 42 days:
 - Residents of long-term care homes, retirement homes, Elder Care Lodges and Assisted Living facilities, as these groups are at the greatest risk of both exposure to COVID-19 and serious illness and death

Current eligibility

Updated or new eligibility criteria

- Adults 75 years of age and older.
- Indigenous adults 16 years of age and older.
- Faith leaders who as part of their regular role are at increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 through close contact with persons and families in the following circumstances:
 - End of life care.
 - Care of the deceased, funerals, bathing, or other ceremony with direct contact with deceased persons.
 - Home visits to unwell persons.
 - Pastoral care in hospitals/LTCHs/RHs or other vulnerable settings.
- The newly eligible groups will be able to access the HPPH booking system by Friday, March 26. HPPH and partners are increasing clinic capacity to meet the increased number of eligible groups in alignment with vaccine supply that is received.

Continued eligibility

- All health care workers.
 - Cohort is defined in further clarity in Appendix A.
- Residents, staff, and essential caregivers associated with long-term care, retirement homes, and other congregate care settings for seniors, including assisted living facilities.
 - Cohort is defined in further clarity in Appendix B.
- Residents and staff of congregate settings with a history of outbreak or with high-risk populations, at the discretion of the local public health unit.
- Adults 16 years of age and older who are chronic home care recipients.

Current Vaccination Activities

- Eligible residents of Huron-Perth will continue to book their vaccinations through the online and phone system established by Huron Perth Public Health (HPPH). If residents use the provincial system, they will be redirected to HPPH's system.
- HPPH continues to add more COVID-19 vaccination appointments; currently appointments are available up to April 17.

- Community clinics continue across Huron-Perth. These are taking place in Goderich and Stratford, as well as some rotating across other municipalities in Huron-Perth. Thank you to our municipal and primary care partners, and all our volunteers, for your support in running these.
- Residents are strongly encouraged to arrive at their appointment time, not early. You will be called in based on your appointment time, not “first come first serve”.
- Residents are strongly encouraged to cancel appointments they have double booked or need to reschedule or cancel. This will free up spots for other eligible residents. Cancellations can be done through email at: VaccineCancellation@hpph.ca or by calling HPPH Vaccine Booking line: 1-833-753-2098 and Press 2 for Cancellations.
- Mobile clinics, with the support of partners, continue for facilities that can accommodate them, and will also be used for priority populations such as some congregate settings.

Please Note

- Please **do not** call your primary care provider, or the pharmacy to book an appointment at a HPPH clinic. Bookings for community clinics are being completed at this time only by HPPH.
 - Please remember that vaccinations are only available to eligible groups.
 - Eligible healthcare workers will be contacted directly by a facility or through your employer.
- If you are 75 years of age in 2021 (born in 1946), or older, or an Indigenous person 16 years of age or older, you need to contact the HPPH booking system at hpph.ca/vaccine or by calling 1-833-753-2098.
- The Health Unit asks people to book their appointment online if they are able, or have a caregiver who can help them book online, since phone lines are very busy.
 - If you call, please listen to the recording. Please follow the prompts.
 - Several local agencies are assisting seniors to book online using the HPPH booking system. Contact the Community Support Services Network at 1-844-482-7800 to be connected to a local agency near you that can assist you. Through that number, accessible rides can also be scheduled where needed.
- **“Once eligible, always eligible”** Once HPPH announces that you are eligible for the vaccine, you are always eligible; you will not miss your chance to be vaccinated as there will be additional opportunities.
- Communications will go out widely to notify eligible candidates for Phases 2 and 3 when those phases are set to begin. Communications will include through our phone line’s vaccination status message as well as print, radio, website, social media and outreach from groups and organizations.
- Find the latest vaccination updates at hpph.ca/vaccines. To hear our regularly updated 24-7 vaccination status message, call HPPH at 888.221.2133 and select “1” for COVID VACCINE. Please listen to the whole message to receive all of the information.
- **Please remember that there will be enough vaccine for everyone.** Anyone who wants to be vaccinated will receive their opportunity to be vaccinated. We appreciate the enthusiasm and patience of those eager to receive COVID vaccine.
- Vaccine doses can be maximized through use of 1mL syringes. We ask our healthcare partners to consider using alternate syringe sizes where appropriate to preserve all 1mL syringes for vaccination purposes in our communities.

For More Information

Please visit www.hpph.ca/vaccine for more information, or contact your HPMVAC sector representative. The HPMVAC membership list is available at www.hpph.ca/vaccine. You can also call HPPH at 888.221.2133 for more information.

About HPMVAC

The Huron Perth COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Advisory Committee (HPMVAC) is a collaborative of multiple relevant sector stakeholder members from our Huron and Perth communities.

Under the leadership of Huron Perth Public Health, our table has been meeting to inform COVID-19 mass vaccination planning and operations for our communities.

This memo serves to update you, our community members and partners. Please note, guidance provided is tentative and subject to change. This reflects the evolving nature of COVID-19 and related supply chain logistics.

APPENDIX A – Health Care Workers

Where a health sector has been named in the priority sector, all frontline workers in that sector are included (e.g., including students, registered volunteers, custodial, security and reception staff). Where a non-health setting has been named, only workers providing a health service or direct patient care are included.

Hospital and acute care health care workers in frontline roles with COVID-19 patients and/or with a high-risk of exposure to COVID-19. These individuals should be regularly scheduled staff (full time or part time) and not transient workers. The staff must be drawn from the following areas:

- Critical Care Units
- Emergency Departments and Urgent Care Departments
- COVID-19 Medical Units
- Code Blue Teams and rapid response teams
- General internal medicine and other specialists involved in the direct care of COVID-19 positive patients

Patient-facing health care workers involved in the COVID-19 response:

- COVID-19 Assessment Centers, including Mobile Testing Teams
- COVID-19 vaccine clinics and mobile immunization teams
- COVID-19 Isolation Centers
- COVID-19 Laboratory Services

Medical First Responders

- ORNGE, paramedics, firefighters and police providing medical first response

Patient-facing community health care workers serving specialized populations including:

- Needle exchange/syringe programs & supervised consumption and treatment services
- Aboriginal Health Access Centers, Indigenous Community Health Centers, Indigenous Interprofessional Primary Care Teams, and Indigenous Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinics
- Community Health Centers serving disproportionately affected communities and/or communities experiencing highest burden of health, social and economic impacts from COVID-19
- Home and community care health care workers caring for recipients of chronic homecare and seniors in congregate living facilities or providing hands-on care to COVID-19 patients.

Frontline healthcare workers working in hospital inpatient settings and hospital procedural areas, including surgical care, anesthesia, obstetrics, endoscopy, operating rooms, dialysis, imaging, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy.

Frontline healthcare workers in the following outpatient and ambulatory areas:

- Hospital-based outpatient clinics
- Primary care, including walk-in clinics, community health centres, and nurse-practitioner-led clinics
- Home and community care
- Adult day programs for seniors
- Community Based Specialty clinics, including medical and surgical specialties

- Death investigation professionals
- Dentistry
- Gynecology/obstetrics, midwifery, and birth centres
- Contract nursing agencies
- Pharmacies
- Assisted living, group homes, residential facilities, supportive housing
- Correctional settings
- Hospices and palliative care settings
- Shelters

Laboratory services.

Frontline healthcare workers in the following outpatient and ambulatory areas, including:

- Developmental services
- Mental health and addictions services
- Campus health
- Community diagnostic imaging
- Daycare/school nursing
- Dietary / nutrition
- Independent health facilities (e.g., Opticians/Optometry, Podiatry, Audiology)
- Naturopathy / Holistic care
- Social work
- Sexual health clinics

Frontline healthcare workers in the following non-acute rehabilitation and therapy areas, including:

- Chiropractic
- Chronic pain clinics
- Kinesiology
- Occupational therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Psychiatry
- Psychology
- Psychotherapy
- Registered massage therapy
- Acupuncture, other therapy

Public health.

Non-Frontline health care workers (e.g., those working remotely, in administration, and who do not require PPE to work).

APPENDIX B – Individuals associated with long-term care and retirement homes

The following individuals associated with long-term care and retirement homes are eligible to receive the first-dose vaccines.

- Long-term care and retirement home residents.
- Long-term care and retirement home staff.
 - Includes LHIN, Hospital, Primary Care and Paramedic Services staff who are directly providing on-site support to LTCH and RHs in outbreak and have committed to a week or more of attending the facility.
- Essential caregivers in long-term care and retirement homes
 - A caregiver is a type of essential visitor who is designated by the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker and is visiting to provide direct care to the resident.
- Alternative level of care patients in hospitals who have a confirmed admission to LTCH, RH, or other congregate care home for seniors, as operationally feasible.