

HPMVAC update: April 8, 2021

Current Vaccination Status in Huron-Perth

- Phase Two is now underway, dependent on regional supply. The province has provided specific direction regarding the order of eligible recipients in the [Guidance for Prioritization of Phase 2 Populations for COVID-19](#).
- However, continued prioritization is needed at a regional level. This is being 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.
- Three pharmacies in Huron-Perth have begun offering AstraZeneca vaccine to adults 55 and over (born 1966 or earlier)
- Please note that the 55+ eligibility for AstraZeneca through pharmacies is different than the eligibility list for HPPH immunization clinics which currently offer Pfizer. Since all COVID-19 vaccines approved by Health Canada are safe and effective, we encourage residents to take whichever vaccine they are eligible for.
- 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. The following groups should receive the COVID-19 vaccine at the dose interval as indicated in the product monographs:
 - 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.
 - Transplant recipients (including solid organ transplants and hematopoietic stem cell transplants).
 - Stable, active treatment for malignant hematologic disorders and non-hematologic solid tumour (excluding individuals receiving solely hormonal therapy or radiation therapy).
 - If you have one of the above two medical conditions, please contact your primary care provider.

Current vaccination progress

- As of April 5, Huron Perth Public Health is reporting 25, 236 vaccine doses administered. In general, we are administering 5,000 doses a week.
 - Public Health Ontario reports that as of March 27:
 - 12.5% of H-P residents have received at least 1 dose (provincial average 11.3%)
 - 2.6% of H-P residents have completed the vaccination series (provincial average 2.1%)
 - (source: COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in Ontario: December 14, 2020 to March 27, 2021 | Public Health Ontario)

- Provincial data shows that Huron-Perth has achieved 91.5% coverage of the age group of individuals 80 and older, receiving at least one dose.

Eligibility

New eligibility criteria

HPPH has opened up its mass immunization clinics to adults age 65 and older (born 1956 or earlier).

Education workers who provide direct support to students with special needs

- Education workers who provide direct support to students with special needs can start to book next week for a vaccination at a future HPPH clinic
- Other education workers in Huron-Perth are not able to book yet, but soon. Select hot spot areas in the province are able to start booking. Plans for next-week vaccination for educators do not apply to Huron-Perth. Next week vaccinations apply to the following areas:
 - Priority neighborhoods in Toronto and Peel
 - Then, rolling out to priority neighborhoods in other hot spot regions, including York, Ottawa, Hamilton, Halton and Durham.
 - This will be followed by a rollout across the province as supply allows.
- As you can see from above, there will be slight variation between health units with regards to who is eligible to book an appointment on any given day. This may mean that staff could be eligible to receive the vaccine earlier or later in other health unit jurisdictions. While we encourage individuals to get vaccinated where they live, Ontarians can be vaccinated anywhere they are eligible. Staff can choose to be receive their vaccine in their home county or the county where they work, however, we ask that individuals do not book more than one appointment.
- HPPH recognizes the need for school and childcare workers to receive their COVID-19 vaccine. We appreciate the continued patience and support, and will continue to communicate as we move through the eligible groups.

Continued eligibility for HPPH immunization clinics

- **Adults 16 years of age and older with the following highest-risk health conditions:**
 - Organ transplant recipients
 - Hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients
 - Neurological diseases in which respiratory function may be compromised (e.g., motor neuron disease, myasthenia gravis, multiple sclerosis)
 - Haematological malignancy diagnosed <1 year
 - Kidney disease eGFR < 30
 - In addition, one (1) primary essential caregiver for an individual with an eligible highest-risk health conditions is now also eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Primary essential caregivers are individuals who provide regular and sustained assistance with personal care and/or activities of daily living.

The above group is eligible to book an appointment at an HPPH community clinic.

- You do not need a letter/ documentation from your primary care provider to receive your immunization or book into a HPPH clinic.
- Some primary care providers will also be reaching out to ensure these eligible groups are aware that they can book.

- Some primary care providers may also be able to offer immunization on site. If so, individuals will be contacted by their primary care provider.
- Individuals may have also received communication from their specialist (e.g. transplant/ renal specialists from LHSC) notifying them that they are now eligible and directing them to our webpage for information.
- **Residents, Primary Essential Caregivers and Staff of High-Risk Congregate Living Settings**

High-risk congregate living settings refer to residential facilities where a high-risk client population live or stay overnight and use shared spaces (e.g. common sleeping areas, shared bathrooms, shared kitchens, communal dining spaces). The settings are at higher risk of transmission, and include:

- Supportive housing
- Developmental services/intervenor including supported independent living
- Emergency homeless shelters
- Other homeless populations not in shelters
- Mental health and addictions congregate living
- Homes for special care
- Employer-provided living accommodations for temporary foreign agricultural workers
- Adult correctional facilities
- Violence Against Women (VAW) shelters
- Anti-Human Trafficking (AHT) residences
- Children’s residential facilities
- Youth justice facilities
- Indigenous healing and wellness
- Bail beds and Indigenous bail beds
- Provincial and demonstration schools/Consortium Centre Jules-Leger
- Inpatients on rehabilitation, complex care, geriatrics and mental health units

Primary essential caregivers are individuals who provide regular and sustained assistance with personal care and/or activities of daily living.

Staff, essential caregivers and residents of high-risk congregate settings are able to book into the HPPH booking system, and outreach is ongoing to groups to determine ability to arrange mobile clinics.

- **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.
- **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 (those with continued eligibility) 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 May 8, taking place in Goderich and Stratford. Thank you to our municipal and primary care partners, and all our volunteers, for your support in running these.
- 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

Booking, cancelling appointments at HPPH clinics

- 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.
 - Anyone eligible for a vaccination, or a trusted individual acting on an eligible person's behalf, can 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.
- 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.
- Please do not book multiple appointments for one person; doing so slows down the booking system.

Appointments at pharmacies

The following pharmacies will begin offering AstraZeneca vaccine to adults 55 and over (born 1966 or earlier). Please book online where possible.

- Pharmasave Michael's Pharmacy, Bayfield: pharmasave.com/bayfield
- Hansen's Your Independent Grocer, Exeter: www.yourindependentgrocer.ca
- Listowel Remedy's Rx, Listowel: 519-291-5311

Visit covid-19.ontario.ca/vaccine-locations for further details on pharmacy locations in Ontario.

Also remember

- **"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.
- 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.
- Anyone who has received a first dose, or both doses, of a COVID-19 vaccine must continue to follow all public health measures. Right now we know the vaccines will protect those who receive it from getting very sick with COVID-19. Until we learn otherwise, however, it is possible that someone who has been vaccinated could still pass the virus on to others. As long as COVID is still circulating at high levels in Ontario, it is important to continue public health measures, even if you are vaccinated.
- 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/Optomety, 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.