

Alberta Public Health Activities Program (APHAP) Influenza Immunization Program 2019/2020

Updates for this year

Removal of the PIN for health care workers

The mechanism for determining health care worker immunization rates has changed and the reason code is no longer required. Immunization of healthcare workers remains a priority and all are encouraged to be immunized.

Cold chain breaks

Pharmacies are to report any cold chain breaks to the vaccine manufacturer as soon as possible and no later than five days for viability determination. A copy of the documentation must be kept with the vaccine. This record must be retained for at least seven years.

Program launch

Initial orders of provincially funded influenza vaccine are expected to be distributed to pharmacies early October 2019. Pharmacists can offer the vaccine as they receive it. Claims will be accepted beginning October 1, 2019. All initial orders of supply will be distributed across the province prior to additional orders being filled. Please do not request early shipment dates. Large influenza immunization clinics will have enough supply to begin the week of October 21, 2019.

Pharmacist participation in the provincially funded influenza immunization program is guided by the Alberta Government *Influenza Immunization Policy (IIP)*, the Alberta College of Pharmacy (ACP) *Standards of Practice for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians*, the *Standards for the Operation of Licensed Pharmacies* and Ministerial Order 614/2018 (the Compensation Plan for Pharmacy Services).

The IIP has been updated and can be accessed at the Alberta Influenza Immunization Policy at <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/alberta-influenza-immunization-policy>.

The Alberta Pharmacists' Association (RxA) has updated their influenza immunization education program for 2019 and 2020, which supports pharmacists in understanding the IIP. The education program should be completed prior to administering influenza vaccine and can be found at <https://www.rxa.ca/professional-development/online-courses.aspx>.

Products

- The vaccine product for the provincially funded program is Quadrivalent Inactivated Vaccine (QIV), available in pharmacies for clients five years of age and older.
- The primary provincially funded influenza vaccine that will be supplied is Fluzone® (predominantly prefilled syringes), however, FluLaval® Tetra and/or other influenza vaccines may also be distributed. FluMist and Fluad will NOT be available as part of the 2019 and 2020 provincially funded program.
- The minimum and maximum order quantities at a time, are: one unit - minimum; 20 units (200 doses) - maximum. Use caution when ordering as quantities are ordered using **units** not doses. One unit is 10 doses of the vaccine.
- Exemptions to the maximum ordering thresholds will be considered during an outbreak situation only, as determined by Alberta Health. Outbreak situations will be communicated to pharmacists via the ACP and the RxA.
- Pharmacies **must order vaccine judiciously**. A sufficient supply of vaccine is available for pharmacies. Destruction of unused vaccine is the pharmacy's responsibility.

Only immunization services provided by ACP injection-authorized pharmacists in approved locations and situations are eligible—for Influenza Immunization Program compensation. Pharmacists may not delegate the administration of publicly funded influenza vaccines to other healthcare professionals (paid or volunteer).

Pharmacists are reminded that Influenza immunizations administered in a workplace setting for the purpose of immunizing employees is different than immunizing in a public off-site clinic. Provincially funded vaccines may be used at workplace settings; however, the assessment for administration of those doses is not provincially funded and cannot be billed to Alberta Blue Cross. Pharmacists may charge the employer for the service delivery.

Pharmacists may administer privately-purchased influenza vaccine (e.g. Fluzone® High Dose) at a cost to the client. Pharmacists must inform the client that provincially funded vaccine is available to them at no cost. Should a client wish to receive a privately purchased vaccine, the vaccine and associated administration costs would be the responsibility of the client. Such costs will not be reimbursed by Alberta Health (at any time). Of note, FluMist is not available to order in Canada for the 2019 and 2020 influenza season.

Vaccine storage and handling

Pharmacies must meet the requirements outlined in the Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine. This policy can be accessed at <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/alberta-vaccine-storage-and-handling-policy-for-provincially-funded-vaccine>.

Cold chain breaks must be reported to the vaccine manufacturer as soon as possible and no later than five days for viability determination. A copy of the documentation must be kept with the vaccine. This record must be retained for at least seven years.

Age of administration

Pharmacists may administer influenza vaccine to Albertans five years of age and older.

Important considerations to note

- Children who are younger than nine years of age and **have never received a dose of seasonal influenza vaccine require two doses** with a minimum spacing of four weeks between doses.
- A review of the child's immunization record can be viewed in Netcare.
- Pharmacists immunizing children five to eight years of age should be comfortable with appropriate restraint and distraction techniques and be prepared to respond to an emergency event (for example, anaphylaxis).
- Pharmacists must submit claims to Alberta Blue Cross within three business days. However, claims for doses administered to a child five to eight years of age should be entered as a priority to prevent delays in updating the child's immunization record to ensure accuracy of the immunization schedule and history. It takes about two weeks for the immunization record to be uploaded for viewing in Netcare.

Claims processes

Pharmacists are required to submit influenza immunization service claims via Alberta Blue Cross within three business days of administering influenza vaccine to assist with vaccine supply monitoring and timely recording of immunization event into Netcare.

For immunization service claims, the individual's Personal Health Number (PHN) will be used to confirm eligibility. Netcare should be accessed to validate PHNs. Incorrect submission of the client's eligibility will result in claim rejections with the response code **C8 - No record of this beneficiary**.

For Reason Code identification, the following PINs must be used for pharmacist-administered provincially funded influenza vaccines:

05666646 - Pregnant Woman

05666602 - Greater than or equal to 65 years of age

05666664 - Five to 64 years of age

If a client falls under more than one PIN category, the number uppermost in the list must be used.

All claims must be submitted electronically through the Alberta Blue Cross PRIDE RT claims adjudication system with the following data elements:

- Carrier Code 16 (as the third-party plan).
- Group number for all transactions must be 23464, Section 000.
- Pharmacy license number.
- Pharmacist identification number.
- Client number: client's personal health number (PHN) as the client number.
- Client's full name: last and first name.
- Client's date of birth.
- Client's gender.
- Relationship code: should your software require you to enter a relationship code, zero (0) must be used as the default.
- Prescriber reference ID number (for example, license number of pharmacists with ACP injection authorization).
- Service date.
- PIN/Reason Code.
- Quantity (for example, one).
- "86" should be used in the Prescriber Reference Code field.

Charges of up to \$13 per injectable influenza immunization service may be claimed as per the Compensation Plan for Pharmacy Services under the *Assessment for the Administration of a Publicly Funded Vaccine*.

Alberta Health Influenza Antiviral Drug Policy as Applied to Vulnerable Populations living in Congregate Living Settings

Through the Alberta Public Health Activities Program (APHAP), the Alberta Health Influenza Antiviral Drug Policy as Applied to Vulnerable Persons Populations living in Congregate Living Settings (policy) facilitates the funding and provision of antiviral drugs at no cost to vulnerable populations living in a congregate living setting.

"Vulnerable Population" means individuals living in Alberta who are at a higher risk of suffering more significant consequences from influenza than the general population, as determined by a Medical Officer of Health, due to one or more factors that include, but are not limited to, age, chronic health conditions or multiple health conditions.

"Congregate Living Setting" means a supportive living accommodation to which the Supportive Living Accommodation Licensing Act applies; homeless shelters; group homes; and any other place in Alberta, excluding Lloydminster, that provides a form of congregate living to individuals who are members of a vulnerable population. Residents of a nursing home under the Nursing Homes Act who have been prescribed an antiviral by a physician or patients in a hospital under the Hospitals Act are not eligible for the funding and provision of influenza antivirals under this policy.

An individual is eligible (Eligible Person) for the funding and provision of an antiviral drug under this policy at no cost to the individual if a Medical Officer of Health has confirmed the individual is a member of a Vulnerable Population and lives in a Congregate Living Setting where an MOH has confirmed the spread of influenza or

Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) and has determined that it is necessary to use an antiviral drug to manage the spread of influenza or ILI for public health purposes.

Antiviral prescriptions should be treated as a priority and dispensed in a manner that meets the needs of the client (such as, compliance packaging). As per the policy, there should be no charge to the Eligible Person for any antiviral prescription costs.

Claims processes

To receive compensation for eligible oseltamivir prescriptions, claims must include the following data elements:

- Carrier Code 16 (as the third-party plan).
- Group number for all transactions must be 23464, Section 000.
- Pharmacy License number.

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- Pharmacist identification number.
- Client number: client's personal health number (PHN). In the case of Albertans with no PHN, such as those in homeless shelters, HL0000000 must be used.
- Client's full name: last and first name.
- Client's date of birth.
- Client's gender.
- Relationship code: should your software require you to enter a relationship code, zero (0) must be used as the default.
- Prescriber reference ID number.
- Service date.
- DIN (for the oseltamivir product).
- Quantity (of oseltamivir dispensed).
- Payment amount (medication cost, upcharges and dispensing fee).
- "86" should be used in the Prescriber Reference Code field.
- EI number in the format YYYYXXX entered into the special authorization field, left justified with no hyphen. Claims without the EI number will be rejected with the response code **CZ - No record of authorization number**. (YYYY is the year when the outbreak was declared by the MOH and XXX is the number of the investigation as provided by Alberta Health Services.)

The following oseltamivir products are eligible for coverage:

DIN/NPN	Product Description
00002381842	Tamiflu 6 mg/ml Oral Suspension
00002241472	Tamiflu 75 mg Capsule
00002304848	Tamiflu 30 mg Capsule
00002304856	Tamiflu 45 mg Capsule
00002472635	Nat-Oseltamivir 30 mg Capsule
00002472643	Nat-Oseltamivir 45 mg Capsule
00002457989	Nat-Oseltamivir 75 mg Capsule

It is of importance that Nat-Oseltamivir be used in accordance with the Health Canada-approved product monograph. In the rare instance where no commercial Tamiflu or Nat-Oseltamivir products are suitable or available, an oseltamivir compound may be claimed using the PIN 00999999 (and the appropriate oseltamivir products).

Claims for oseltamivir prescriptions billed to other Government of Alberta drug plans, such as Coverage for Seniors (Group 66), are not eligible for coverage.

When you have questions:

For assistance with benefit or claim inquiries, please contact an Alberta Blue Cross Pharmacy Services Provider Relations contact centre representative at:

780-498-8370 (Edmonton and area) • **403-294-4041** (Calgary and area) • **1-800-361-9632** (toll free)

FAX 780-498-8406 (Edmonton and area) • **FAX 1-877-305-9911** (toll free)

Alberta Blue Cross offers online access to current Pharmacy Benefits and supplemental claiming information to assist with the submission of your direct bill drug claims. **Visit** ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php



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