

Alberta Public Health Activities Program (APHAP)

Alberta Influenza Immunization Program 2022/2023

This season's provincially funded Alberta Influenza Immunization Program begins for the general public on **October 17, 2022**. For those pharmacies participating in the Alberta Outreach Program, immunizers can begin outreach immunization for residents and staff as soon as influenza vaccine is available.

- Outreach activities must meet the outreach definition as outlined in the Alberta Influenza Immunization Policy.
- COVID-19 and influenza vaccines should be co-administered when possible.

Pharmacist participation in the provincially funded influenza immunization program is guided by:

- the Alberta Government Influenza Immunization Policy (IIP), which has been updated for 2022/2023 and can be accessed at open.alberta.ca/dataset/alberta-influenza-immunization-policy;
- the Alberta College of Pharmacy (ACP) Standards of Practice for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians and the Standards for the Operation of Licensed Pharmacies; and
- the Ministerial Order - Compensation Plan for Pharmacy Services, which can be accessed at <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/health2-606-2022>.

Prior to participating in the Alberta Influenza Immunization Program, pharmacy teams must review the IIP, ACP Standards and the Compensation Plan for Pharmacy Services to fully understand the requirements and operations of this year's immunization program.

The Alberta Pharmacists' Association is updating the influenza immunization education program for 2022/2023, which supports pharmacists in understanding the IIP. Once available, it will be accessible at <https://rxa.ca/we-educate/online-learning/>. The education program, titled The Yearly Booster Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Program 2022-2023, should be completed prior to administering influenza vaccine.

Influenza immunization service delivery will prioritize the outreach program that focuses on protecting those high-risk populations in the highest risk congregate living settings.

Albertans wanting influenza vaccine in the pharmacy setting (no matter the individual's risk) will have to wait until the general program launches on **October 17, 2022**. This is to ensure adequate time for all pharmacies to receive vaccine for the public launch and to support streamlined communication.

continued next page

continued from previous page

Administering and claiming

Pharmacies must order vaccine judiciously. A sufficient supply of vaccine is available for pharmacies and the vaccine arrives in the province in a series of shipments.

Influenza vaccine is distributed to pharmacies through Pharmacy Wholesale Distributors (PWD) in collaboration with Alberta Health.

There has been a change in the process for initial vaccine supply. Maximum pipeline fill doses for both outreach and in-store administration will be determined by Alberta Health and communicated to your respective primary wholesaler.

Based on vaccine supply, once pipeline fills are complete, the maximum weekly order amount is 100 units (1,000 doses) for Standard Dose Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine (SD-QIV) and 20 units (100 doses) for HighDose Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine (HD-QIV).

Influenza vaccine must be ordered in units, not doses. One unit is equal to 10 doses for SD-QIV and one unit is equal to five doses for HD-QIV. Pharmacy wholesale distributors cannot take the vaccine back if errors in ordering occur at the pharmacy level.

For PINs and claiming information, please see the Alberta Blue Cross website for the [Reference Guide for Administering and Claiming Influenza Vaccines](#) and the *Alberta Health Influenza Antiviral Drug Policy as applied to Vulnerable Populations Living in Congregate Living Settings* for additional details.

Key updates for this year—COVID-19 vaccine considerations, Alberta Vaccine Inventory Reporting Process, Alberta Vaccine Booking System

Start date

The Alberta Influenza Immunization Program will begin on **October 17, 2022**, for the general public. Unlike previous years, pharmacies may not administer to the general public (no matter the individual's risk) as soon as supply is received, and must wait for the **October 17, 2022** start date.

Consideration for spacing Influenza vaccine with COVID-19 vaccine

Every appropriate opportunity to co-administer Influenza and COVID-19 vaccines should be taken. Individuals five years of age and older, in most cases, can receive both vaccines on the same day using different injection sites and separate needles and syringes. A review of the client's immunization record is required prior to administering either vaccine.

continued next page

continued from previous page

Alberta Vaccine Inventory (AVI) reporting process

To safeguard vaccine accountability and visibility, the AVI system will be used for inventory management for influenza vaccines. If your pharmacy has not already enrolled in AVI and intends to participate in the Alberta IIP, please complete enrolment by accessing the online registration form on the AVI homepage at vimsavi.alberta.ca/prod/main.jsp.

Pharmacies must access the AVI system to receive transfers of vaccine from the pharmacy wholesale distributors (the wholesaler will have 48 business hours to complete the transfer in AVI) and on a weekly basis to reconcile the inventory. A physical count of your on-hand quantities and a reconciliation amount must be completed every Monday, no later than 9 p.m. to fulfill required reporting to Alberta Health.

The on-hand quantities reported in AVI will be used to manage vaccine inventory in the province and accuracy is essential to managing the distribution of influenza vaccine in the province.

Training materials are posted online that review the processes for accessing AVI, receiving transfers and reconciling inventory. Please visit the AVI homepage for all quick reference guides on how to use AVI.

If a pharmacy fails to manage and update inventory in AVI, such as receiving transfers and weekly reconciliation, Alberta Health may remove or suspend the pharmacy from participation in the Alberta Immunization Program.

Alberta Vaccine Booking System

The Alberta Vaccine Booking System (AVBS) is a tool that can be used to support Albertans scheduling an appointment for a COVID-19 and/or influenza vaccine. Even though the AVBS is not mandatory for community pharmacies to utilize, Alberta Health continues to direct Albertans to the AVBS to review available appointments within both community pharmacies and Alberta Health Services clinics.

For the upcoming Alberta IIP, the AVBS will be updated to include two new influenza vaccine tags (one for Standard Dose and one for High Dose) for use when creating appointment schedules. More information on the AVBS and the influenza program will come later.

If you require AVBS support, please contact the AVBS Provider Support team at 1-844-705-1265, or AlbertaVaccineBookingSystemSupport@gov.ab.ca

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 Benefacts and supplemental claiming information to assist with the submission of your direct bill drug claims.

Visit ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php

