

Alberta Public Health Activities Program (APHAP) Influenza Immunization end of 2020/2021 season

Thank you to all pharmacists who participated in the 2020/2021 Alberta Influenza Immunization Program.

Please be advised that the end date for the 2020/2021 program is March 31, 2021.

2020/2021 influenza season highlights

- More than 1.56 million Albertans were immunized.
- Pharmacists immunized more than 1,096,655 Albertans.
- The Alberta influenza immunization rate is currently 35 per cent, a 3 per cent increase over the 2019/2020 season. Of note, the influenza immunization target for all Albertans is 35 per cent.

Second doses for children

Children five to nine years of age eligible for a second dose of influenza vaccine can receive it until April 30, 2021. Pharmacy wholesale distributors will not be distributing influenza vaccine after March 31, 2021. Pharmacists can complete the second dose until April 30, if the influenza vaccine is available. If vaccine is not available at your pharmacy, refer clients to another health care practitioner. Alberta Blue Cross will accept claims until April 30, 2021, for this age group.

Unused and expired provincially funded influenza vaccine

All provincially funded influenza vaccine must be removed from cold chain storage for appropriate destruction by your pharmacy's standard of practice (Standard 5.13) on May 1, 2021.

Pharmacy wholesalers cannot accept provincially funded influenza vaccine returns. You are responsible for the proper destruction of unused/expired vaccine. The cost of destruction will not be reimbursed.

Immunization Regulation and privately funded vaccine

In October 2018, the Government of Alberta established the new Immunization Regulation (Alta. Reg. 182/2018). The Immunization Regulation applies to all privately purchased and provincially funded vaccines.

- All health practitioners, once made aware by a patient, are required to report adverse events following immunization. Whether or not the individual pharmacist administered the vaccine, pharmacists must complete and submit the AEFI report form hosted on the Alberta Health Services website.
- Pharmacists who administer vaccines, and staff who handle vaccines, must follow the requirements related to storing, handling and transporting of vaccines as outlined in the Immunization Regulation.
- There are new immunization reporting requirements outlined in the Immunization Regulation that came into effect on January 1, 2021.
 - o Alberta Health is working with pharmacy vendors to integrate pharmacy point-of-care systems to the Provincial Immunization Repository (Imm/ARI).
 - o Provincially funded vaccine (COVID-19, influenza, dTap in pregnancy and pneumococcal for age 65+) are batched into Imm/ARI through the Alberta Blue Cross claims data that pharmacists submit.
 - o Please only use the Immunization Direct Submission Mechanism for privately funded vaccine.
 - o Pharmacists can register to access the IDSM by following these instructions.

More information about the Immunization Regulation can be found at <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-immunization-policy.aspx>.

If you have any questions, please contact health.imm@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

