



MEMO: Update on Regional Prioritization of COVID-19 Vaccine

January 20, 2021

Huron Perth Public Health, Middlesex-London Health, and Southwestern Public Health will provide regular updates on the eligibility criteria for recipients of the COVID-19 vaccine in their respective regions.

The Ministry of Health, through the guidance of the provincial COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force led by General Rick Hillier, directs the allocation of the vaccine. Vaccine supply differs by region. Given scarce vaccine supply, a regional **COVID-19 Vaccine Prioritization Advisory Committee** has been struck to help inform the public health units decisions regarding further prioritization when necessary. For more information on the COVID-19 Vaccine Prioritization Advisory Committee, please visit the Middlesex-London Health Unit website at www.healthunit.com.

Current Provincial Direction on Prioritization

The province has directed all first doses must be prioritized for long-term care and high-risk retirement home residents, staff, and essential caregivers. The goal is to vaccinate all long-term care and high-risk retirement home residents by February 15, 2020.

Supply Constraints

The only product currently available in the region is the Pfizer-BioNtech COVID-19 vaccine. Due to manufacturing delays, no additional product is anticipated in the region before the week of February 1, 2021 at the earliest. **The significant reduction in supply has resulted in further prioritization.**

Additional Regional Direction on Prioritization

Given provincial direction and the limited number of doses that are available regionally, only the following people are eligible to receive the first dose of the vaccine, effective immediately. Eligibility will be reviewed weekly and will be dependent on vaccine supply and Provincial direction.

ELIGIBLE FOR FIRST-DOSE:

- Long-term care home residents, as defined by the Ministry of Long-Term Care
- High-risk retirement homes residents, as defined by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility
 - Co-located with long-term care homes
 - Containing a memory unit
 - Identified as Red or Yellow by the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA)

ELIGIBLE FOR END-OF-DAY DOSES

At the end of each clinic, there may be a small amount of additional vaccine available that is to be used to avoid wastage.

Eligible for additional vaccine available at end-of-day during a mobile clinic, in the following order:

1. Long-term care or high-risk retirement home staff*, first dose
2. Long-term care or high-risk retirement home staff*, second dose if appropriate
3. Essential caregiver

Eligible for additional vaccine available at end-of-day at the Western Fair Agriplex, in the following order:

1. Long-term care or high-risk retirement home staff*, first dose
2. Long-term care or high-risk retirement home staff*, second dose if appropriate
3. Essential caregiver
4. Immunizers of the COVID-19 vaccine
 - a. Immunizers are vaccinated to limit the potential for transmission between facilities when the mobile clinics are deployed

* LHIN, Hospital, Primary Care and Paramedic Services staff who are directly providing on-site support to long-term care and retirement homes in outbreak, and have committed to a week or more of attending the facility, are considered as long-term care or high-risk retirement home staff.

NOT CURRENTLY ELIGIBLE FOR FIRST-DOSE

No other individuals are currently eligible for the vaccine in this region. This includes the following exclusions:

- Previous COVID-19 cases are not eligible to receive the vaccine at this time given the scarce supply. Previous COVID-19 cases are assumed to have residual immunity.
- Individuals with active respiratory symptoms.
- Independent living facilities, seniors' apartments, hospice sites, and adult day programs.
- Healthcare workers not explicitly listed in the eligible groups.

CHANGES TO SECOND-DOSE SCHEDULE

Consistent with the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI), some jurisdictions may maximize the number of individuals benefiting from a first dose of vaccine by delaying the second dose until further supplies of the vaccine become available, preferably within 42 days of receipt of the first dose.

Given the scarce vaccine supply and in keeping with the direction from Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health:

- All second-doses of non-long-term care home and retirement home staff or residents will be rescheduled to 39-42 days after their first dose.
- All efforts will be made to continue to administer the second dose of long-term care home and retirement home staff at 21-27 days after their first dose. However, if required due to further supply constraints, second-doses of long-term care home and retirement home staff may be rescheduled up to 42 days after their first dose.