

COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #12

Those 70 to 74 Years Old Can Now Book on Provincial Booking System and Updated Dose 2 Interval for Transplant and Cancer Patients

Attention: Physicians, Emergency Departments, Hospital CEOs, Hospital Laboratories, Infection Control Practitioners, Occupational Health Practitioners, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Nurse Practitioners, EMS, Designated Officers, Midwives, Family Health Teams, Pharmacies, Central LHIN, NSM LHIN, Beausoleil First Nation, Moose Deer Point First Nation, Rama First Nation, Wahta First Nation, Long-term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Hospices, Coroners, Funeral Directors, Dentists, Group Homes, Homes for Special Care, Optometrists, Corrections

Date: March 30, 2021

The provincial booking system is now open to anyone 70+ years of age (born 1951 or earlier) living in Simcoe Muskoka to book an appointment to receive their COVID-19 vaccine directly.

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) opened preregistration for those 70-74 on Thursday, before being notified of this change to the provincial booking system. Anyone who pre-registered between Thursday March 25 and 8:30 a.m. on Saturday March 27, should have received an email invitation with a booking code to book their appointment on the provincial booking system. Anyone 70-74 years old who preregistered but did not receive a booking code, should go ahead and book an appointment directly on the provincial booking system.

Those who belong to other priority groups who have already been eligible (health care workers (HCW), all Indigenous adults (living on-reserve or urban) and their adult household members, adult recipients of chronic home care, essential caregivers for residents of long-term care or rest and retirement homes, and faith leaders with increased risk of exposure) can still continue to pre-register for vaccination on the SMDHU website at any time.

Important Information about Booking Appointments on the Provincial Booking System

- Vaccine supply for each clinic is estimated based on the number of appointments booked each morning. Those who book same day appointments have the potential for there not being enough vaccine available for them to be vaccinated. Messaging alerting people to this has been added to the provincial booking system.
- When booking an appointment on the provincial booking system, people must book appointments to receive both dose 1 and dose 2. Once this has been done successfully they will receive a booking confirmation by email that they need to bring with them to their appointment. Many people



have only been getting as far as the first appointment and thinking they have booked when in fact their booking has not gone through.

Updated Recommendations on Exceptions to Extended Dose Intervals for COVID-19 Vaccines

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recently released a recommendation to extend the interval between first and second dose up to 4 months, which has been adopted in Ontario to maximize vaccination by giving more people their first dose while we are still in a time of limited vaccine supply. The Ontario Vaccine Clinical Advisory Group has identified specific populations for which there continues to be limited available data on vaccine efficacy and effectiveness, who are at increased risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19 and who may have a suboptimal immune response to vaccines on the basis of underlying condition.

The following groups are to receive their second dose at the recommended product monograph interval (21 days for Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine and 28 days for Moderna COVID-19 vaccine):

- Transplant recipients (including solid organ transplants and hematopoietic stem cell transplants)
- Individuals with malignant hematologic disorders and non-hematologic malignant solid tumors receiving stable, active treatment (chemotherapy, targeted therapies, immunotherapy), excluding those receiving solely hormonal therapy or radiation therapy

This is in addition to previously identified groups for receiving second dose at the recommended product monograph interval (Residents of Long-term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, and Elder Care Lodges; and those living in First Nation communities). These are the only groups at this time to receive their second dose at the 21-28 day interval. According to provincial directive, all others are to be given at 16 weeks. Public health is unable to make any exceptions to this directive.

For those in these two new groups who have already received their first dose (due to other eligibility such as age or chronic home care recipient) and who need to book an appointment for their second dose, they are asked to **please visit the SMDHU website and complete our registration form**. We will then follow up with them to book an appointment to receive their second dose. People may be required to provide documentation to verify that they meet the criteria outlined above. We will review this with people when we are contacting them to book their appointment.

For those who are not yet vaccinated in these two new groups, they will be included in the upcoming Phase 2 vaccination roll out as eligible populations under the Health Conditions eligibility, with dose 2 booked at the appropriate interval.

Tools to Support Decision Making about COVID-19 Vaccine and Pregnancy or Breastfeeding

A [Decision-Making Toolⁱ](#) was issued on March 8, 2021 by the Provincial Council for Maternal and Child Health. The tool is designed to support patients and health care providers in the decision-making process about getting a COVID-19 vaccine before, during or after pregnancy or while breastfeeding. It outlines the risks and benefits to be considered to support informed decision making about vaccination. The following [patient information sheetⁱⁱ](#) was also developed to support patients. The following [guidance documentⁱⁱⁱ](#) was also released to support health care providers in supporting their patients.

For more information about the rollout of COVID-19 vaccine in our area, please refer to the [SMDHU COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunization Webpages^{iv}](#).

Additional Information

For more information on the province's three-phased vaccine distribution implementation plan, please visit [COVID-19 vaccines for Ontario](#).^v

There are a number of COVID-19 resources and documents available through our Health Professional Portal at www.smdhu.org/hpportal as well as through [Public Health Ontario](#)^{vi} and the [Government of Ontario](#).^{vii}

Effective March 31, 2021 SMDHU *will cease the distribution of HealthFAX via fax* and will be transitioning to an email notification system titled **Public Health Alert**. To ensure you continue receiving time sensitive **Public Health Alert** by e-mail, you will need to register. If you have not yet registered, please visit www.smdhu.org/phalert and complete the online form.

ⁱ https://www.pcmch.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/COVID-19-Vaccine-Infographic-2021_03_08.pdf

ⁱⁱ <https://www.pcmch.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Patient-Information-Sheet-Intended-Use-and-References.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/vaccine/COVID-19_vaccination_rec_special_populations.pdf

^{iv} <https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/COVID-19/Vaccine-and-Immunization>

^v <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-vaccines-ontario>

^{vi} <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/>

^{vii} http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/2019_guidance.aspx