Influenza Vaccine Campaign 2022-2023: Bulletin #1

The provincial influenza vaccination campaign is set to start in October. Influenza vaccine will be offered to BC residents at community COVID-19 booster clinics, pharmacies, as well as physician and nurse practitioner offices. Reported cases of influenza were very low the last two winters, but this summer saw a rebound increase in influenza activity in select Southern Hemisphere jurisdictions, which may occur in the Northern Hemisphere this winter. The influenza vaccination campaign thus remains a critical component of protection against seasonal respiratory illness, which poses significant morbidity for vulnerable children and adults. In addition, it reduces the risk of unnecessary isolation or testing for COVID-19. We encourage you to work with your local Division of Family Practice to offer influenza immunization clinics to your patients.

**Eligibility:** Influenza vaccine is recommended and provided free for all BC residents ≥ 6 months of age. In particular, it should be offered to:

- People at high risk of influenza complications (all children 6-59 months of age, adults 65 years of age and older, pregnant women, children and adults 5-64 years of age with underlying chronic health conditions)
- People capable of transmitting influenza to those at high risk, including household contacts, health care workers, and visitors to health care facilities
- People who provide essential community services
- Anyone else who wishes to reduce their risk of influenza

**Publicly funded influenza vaccines available this season:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product name</th>
<th>Fluzone® Quadrivalent</th>
<th>Flumist® Quadrivalent</th>
<th>Fluad® Trivalent, Adjuvanted</th>
<th>Fluzone® High-Dose Quadrivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intended use</td>
<td>≥ 6 months of age</td>
<td>2-17 years of age</td>
<td>≥ 65 years³ of age</td>
<td>≥ 65 years³ of age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Format</td>
<td>MDV or PFS</td>
<td>PFS</td>
<td>PFS</td>
<td>PFS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strains</td>
<td>A/Victoria/2570/2019 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus</td>
<td>A/Darwin/9/2021 (H3N2)-like virus (NEW strain this year)</td>
<td>B/Austria/1359417/2021-like virus (B/Victoria lineage) (NEW strain this year)</td>
<td>B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (B/Yamagata lineage) – in quadrivalent vaccines only</td>
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</tbody>
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**Notes:**

1. Flumist® is a live, attenuated vaccine, administered as intranasal spray; additional contraindications apply.
2. Do not miss an immunization opportunity: if an intended product is not available, please use an appropriate alternate product.
3. There are two influenza vaccines available for people 65 years and older: Fluad® for community dwelling seniors, and Fluzone HD® for individuals 65+ who are residents of Long Term Care or Assisted Living facilities or residents of First Nation communities. Individuals 65+ can also be offered Fluzone®.
4. MDV = Multi-dose vial; PFS = Pre-filled single-dose syringes or sprayers.

Reminder: People with severe egg allergy (including anaphylaxis) can be offered any influenza vaccine. Timing: Influenza vaccine can be given at the same time as, or any interval from, COVID-19 vaccine or other vaccines.
Vaccine ordering and distribution process: We expect to start receiving influenza vaccine by mid to late September and will be offering an initial supply to primary care offices soon after. If your office received influenza vaccine last year, you do not need to place an initial order. Offices new to the influenza vaccination campaign are invited to call their local health unit to register and request vaccine.

As several deliveries are expected through to December, clinics will be able to re-order vaccine as needed. As in previous years, multi-group practices should place orders for the entire group. Please wait to schedule your influenza immunization clinics until we communicate further details on the dates of vaccine arrival and distribution.