



## MEMO

**TO:** Community-Based Physicians  
**FROM:** Dr. Janice Fitzgerald, MD, MPH Chief Medical Officer of Health  
**DATE:** May 18, 2021  
**SUBJECT:** Community-Based Physicians Offering COVID-19 Vaccine

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Plans are now underway to expand the COVID-19 immunization program. It is anticipated that Moderna vaccine will be available for distribution to physicians' offices participating in the COVID-19 vaccination program as early as the week of May 24, 2021.

The intention of this memo is to provide information to interested physicians on the type of vaccine, eligible recipients of the vaccine, transportation and storage, and information on ordering personal protective equipment (PPE) and vaccine supplies.

Newfoundland and Labrador will have a limited supply of Moderna vaccine to distribute to physicians by the end of May 2021, with more vaccine available for distribution in the coming months.

If you are interested in providing COVID-19 vaccines in your private office at this time, please contact the appropriate Regional Health Authority (RHA) depending on the location of your office by May 21, 2021. The RHA will coordinate physicians participating in COVID-19 immunization roll-out.

### Eastern Health:

Interested providers in Eastern Health are asked to contact Catherine McCarthy at [Catherine.McCarthy@easternhealth.ca](mailto:Catherine.McCarthy@easternhealth.ca).

### Western Health:

Western Health will contact all physicians who have already expressed interest in vaccinating. If you have not already expressed interest and would like to participate please contact [janicecoleman@westernhealth.nl.ca](mailto:janicecoleman@westernhealth.nl.ca).

### Central Health:

Interested providers in Central Health are asked to contact Pamela Fifield at (709) 292-2151 or [pamela.fifield@centralhealth.nl.ca](mailto:pamela.fifield@centralhealth.nl.ca)

### Labrador-Grenfell Health:

Interested providers in Labrador-Grenfell Health can contact Margaret Fry, Regional Director of Population Health, at [Margaret.fry@lghealth.ca](mailto:Margaret.fry@lghealth.ca) or (709) 280-0615.

## **COVID-19 Measures**

When planning to administer COVID-19 vaccine, participating physicians are to ensure that public health measures are followed. For the latest information on COVID-19 public health guidance, please visit <https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/>. Appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is recommended and includes physicians wearing a mask and face shield and clients wearing a non-medical mask.

PPE and vaccine supplies will be provided to all participating physicians administering COVID-19 immunizations. The order form for vaccine supplies is attached. PPE kits can be ordered through Headway NL by emailing [orders@headwaynl.com](mailto:orders@headwaynl.com) or calling 1-855-878-9773. A standard PPE kit from Headway includes 50 level 2+ masks, 10 face shields, 1 box of medium gloves, 1 box large gloves, and 10 gowns. For more information on ordering PPE kits from Headway, please refer to their memo below.

As a guide for ordering PPE, one eight-hour shift with one immunizer would need five masks and one shield. This will allow a change of mask during breaks and lunch and additional masks if one becomes wet or soiled. For more information on PPE and pandemic measures, refer to the attached document, [Clinic Guidance for COVID-19 Immunization](#).

COVID-19 immunizations will require pre-booking for first dose. Pre-booking for second dose should be done at the same time or at time of administration of first dose. Avoiding wastage of COVID-19 vaccine is an important consideration to factor into clinic planning. NL follows the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization](#) (NACI) recommendations for dosage intervals. At this time, the interval between the first and second dose of Moderna vaccine is 4 months.

## **Recipients for COVID-19 Immunization**

Moderna is currently age indicated for those 18 years of age and older. Physicians can offer vaccine during phase 3 of NL's COVID-19 vaccination roll-out and will be able to administer vaccine to anyone 18 years of age and older.

## **Special Populations for COVID-19 Vaccination**

Newfoundland and Labrador's COVID-19 immunization program is following the recommendations from NACI on the use of vaccines for special populations including individuals who are immunosuppressed due to disease or treatment, individuals with an autoimmune condition, individuals who are pregnant or breastfeeding, and adolescents 12 to 15 years of age.

Updated information on special populations can be found here: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/vaccine/resources-for-health-care-professionals/special-populations/>

## **Vaccine Products**

The COVID-19 vaccines provided to participating physicians will be stored and transported at 2°

to 8° C. The process for storage and transportation of COVID-19 vaccines provided to participating physicians will be similar to the processes carried out for the Influenza vaccine. Please review the attached **COVID-19 Vaccine Storage and Handling Factsheet for Physicians** for specific information, including the shelf life of Moderna vaccine stored at 2° to 8° C.

COVID-19 vaccine used by participating physicians within NL will be based on current product availability. Product monographs and other information related to the COVID vaccines being used in NL can be found here: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/vaccine/resources-for-health-care-professionals/>

Please refer to the product monographs and National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) statements to note precautions, and contraindications. Note that each vaccine may have different expiry and usage indications after the vial is punctured.

### **National Advisory Committee on Immunization**

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) has developed recommendations for the use of COVID-19 vaccines.

For more information, visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci/recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines.html>

The Department of Health and Community Services' information on the storage and handling of COVID-19 vaccines may vary slightly from the NACI recommendations. In these cases, the Department of Health and Community Services has performed necessary due diligence and consulted directly with vaccine product manufacturers to ensure safety and accuracy for provincial guidance.

### **Adverse Events Following Immunization**

All Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFIs) are to be reported to the Regional Medical Officer of Health as soon as possible. For details please refer to: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/files/publichealth-cdc-s1-routine-guidlns-schedules.pdf>

Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) form: <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/immunization/aefi-form-july23-2020-eng.pdf>

### **Vaccine Ordering Process**

The distribution and supply of vaccine will be monitored very closely through the RHA. The distribution on the vaccine will depend upon the supply received by the province. To prevent waste, it is important not to overstock COVID-19 vaccine.

Information on ordering vaccine will be communicated to participating physicians by the respective RHA.

### **Vaccine Storage and Cold Chain Monitoring**

The COVID-19 vaccines provided to participating physicians will be transported and stored at 2° to 8° C. COVID-19 vaccine storage, transport and cold chain monitoring will be similar to the monitoring of Influenza vaccine.

Vaccine temperature, storage, handling and shipping requirements **must** be adhered to at all times. Vaccine viability may be compromised if not stored properly. Insulated coolers and sufficient supply of ice packs will be required when picking up vaccine. Vaccine will not be released without proper cooling containers for transportation to pharmacies.

Strict adherence to vaccine stability will be required within your private office.

Detailed storage and handling guidelines for COVID-19 vaccines can be found in the attached **COVID-19 Vaccine Storage and Handling Factsheet for Physicians**. Please check the website frequently for any updates, including specific guidelines for physicians when vaccine is available to order.

You may also visit section 7.3 of the NL Immunization Manual:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/files/publichealth-cdc-im-section7-biological-products.pdf>

### **COVID-19 Administration Data Entry**

Particularly with COVID-19 vaccination, the timely and accurate reporting of COVID-19 immunizations is extremely valuable to Public Health.

- Immunization data is used in vaccine planning activities to inform how and where to direct valuable vaccine resources.
- Detailed information allows public health to quickly identify populations where vaccine uptake may be low and target education and awareness campaigns to those areas.
- Your reporting will assist in compiling regional, provincial and federal reports and allow us to meet important program goals such as knowing what percentage of our population has been immunized.
- The immunization data is linked to our COVID case reporting database, allowing public health to study vaccine effectiveness and breakthrough disease.
- Complete and timely COVID-19 immunization data is important to evaluate and present and future public health measures.
- Electronic immunizations data will feed into HEALTHe NL. Starting in June 2021, providers will be able to view vaccination records and be able to offer appropriate vaccine product and appropriate dose interval when a patient presents to a clinic for second dose.
- Vaccine product information and lot numbers may need to be accessed quickly in

the event of a vaccine recall.

Physicians have a responsibility to ensure proper documentation of COVID-19 vaccine administration. The expectation is that all COVID-19 immunizations are documented as record level data within Med Access EMR. For physicians without Med Access EMR an EMR light solution has been created by NLCHI to assist physicians who do not currently use the EMR. Please email [info@edocsnl.ca](mailto:info@edocsnl.ca) to get set up with EMR light. Documentation and training videos on how to use the solution will be made available and support provided by NLCHI.

If a physician is unable to use EMR or EMR light, paper documentation can be used. The paper consent form can be found under COVID-19 immunization documents on this website: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/vaccine/resources-for-health-care-professionals/> (note: the online consent form is a fillable PDF form. You can view the form using Internet Explorer. If you are using another browser, you can download the file and view it in Adobe Reader). The consent form as to be filled out in full and returned within 24 hrs of immunization. To arrange for courier pickup, email Susan Peach at [Susan.Peach@nlchi.nl.ca](mailto:Susan.Peach@nlchi.nl.ca). If email is not available, please call (709)752-6000. They can be sent or dropped off at:

COVID-19 Vaccination Forms  
70 O'Leary Ave.  
St. John's, NL  
A1B 2C9

## PPE and Vaccine Supply Order Form



### COVID Vaccination Supplies – (required to administer the vaccine)

From Inventory:  Immunization Supplies

Department charge code: \_\_\_\_\_ (internal use)

*Please complete in full:*

Ordered by: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address to ship to: \_\_\_\_\_

Meditech #	Quantity	Unit of issue	Description
00103		Bx/200 Each	Alcohol Swabs
00098		Bag/1000 Each	Cotton Balls
00827		Box/100 Each	Band-Aids
69578		Box/100 Each	Needle 25 G x 1"
69580		Box/100 Each	Needle 21 G x 1"
69579		Box/100 Each	Needle 23 G x 1 1/4"
69581		Box/100 Each	Needle 25 G x 5/8"
66869		Box/100 Each	Syringe
69557		Each	Sharps Container 3 Gallon
33727		Box/50 Each	Poly-lined Sterile Field Pad

### *To order your PPE for the Covid Vaccination:*

Email: [Orders@headwaynl.com](mailto:Orders@headwaynl.com)

Phone: 1-855-878-9773

#### Directions to submit:

1. Please complete this form and send via e-mail to [inventory.supplychain@centralhealth.nl.ca](mailto:inventory.supplychain@centralhealth.nl.ca) for your covid vaccination supplies as listed in the table above
2. Email [orders@headwaynl.com](mailto:orders@headwaynl.com) for you PPE supplies

Disclaimer: This PPE is intended only for health care professionals administering the covid 19 vaccine



Email: [orders@headwaynl.com](mailto:orders@headwaynl.com)  
Phone: 1-855-878-9773

**Standard PPE Kit for administering COVID-19 immunizations**

**Contents:**

- 50 Level 2+ Masks
- 10 Face Shields
- box Med Gloves
- box large Gloves
- 10 Gowns

If the clinic kit becomes depleted, an additional kit can be ordered using the email above. As a guide for ordering PPE, one eight-hour shift with one immunizer would need five masks and one shield. This will allow a change of mask during breaks and lunch and additional masks if one becomes wet or soiled. For more information on PPE and pandemic measures, refer to the attached document, **Clinic Guidance for COVID-19 Immunization During Pandemic.**

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Headway Office, 1 King Street, Placentia A0B 2Y0  
1-855-878-9773 [jane@headwaynl.com](mailto:jane@headwaynl.com)

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## **COVID-19 Vaccine Storage and Handling Factsheet**

This factsheet can be used as a guide when storing and handling Moderna COVID-19 vaccine that is transported and stored between 2° to 8° C. For more information on vaccine storage, please visit: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/files/publichealth-cdc-im-section7-biological-products.pdf>

### **Transport of Vaccine**

- Vaccine is to be packed in insulated/thermal carriers with ice packs. Insulated carriers and ice packs are the responsibility of the physician acquiring vaccine from the Regional Health Authority (RHA). To avoid freezing, the ice packs should be allowed to remain at room temperature for 3-5 minutes before being placed next to the vaccine. When vaccine is picked up from the RHA it will be ready to be placed into the insulated carrier. ***(Note: please note, the process may vary between RHA depots. RHAs will communicate transportation requirements when vaccine is ordered).***
- Vaccines should not be transported in the trunk or rear of private vehicles.
- When vaccine arrives at its destination, it should be immediately placed in a vaccine fridge regulated at 2-8 degrees.

### **Specific Storage Requirements of Moderna Vaccine**

- RHA's will be providing physicians with thawed vaccine at 2-8 degrees. It is important to note that Moderna vaccine vials that are not punctured are stable for 30 days at 2-8 degrees. You will be advised of this expiry date upon receiving vaccine at your regional depot. Please note, the expiring date is NOT the date on the vaccine vial, you will need to follow the expiration date provided by the RHA.
- Moderna vaccine that has not been punctured is also stable at room temperature for a total of 12 hours. Multiple exposures to room temperature can occur but the total time cannot exceed 12 hours.
- Once a Moderna vaccine vial is punctured, it **must be utilized within 6 hours**.

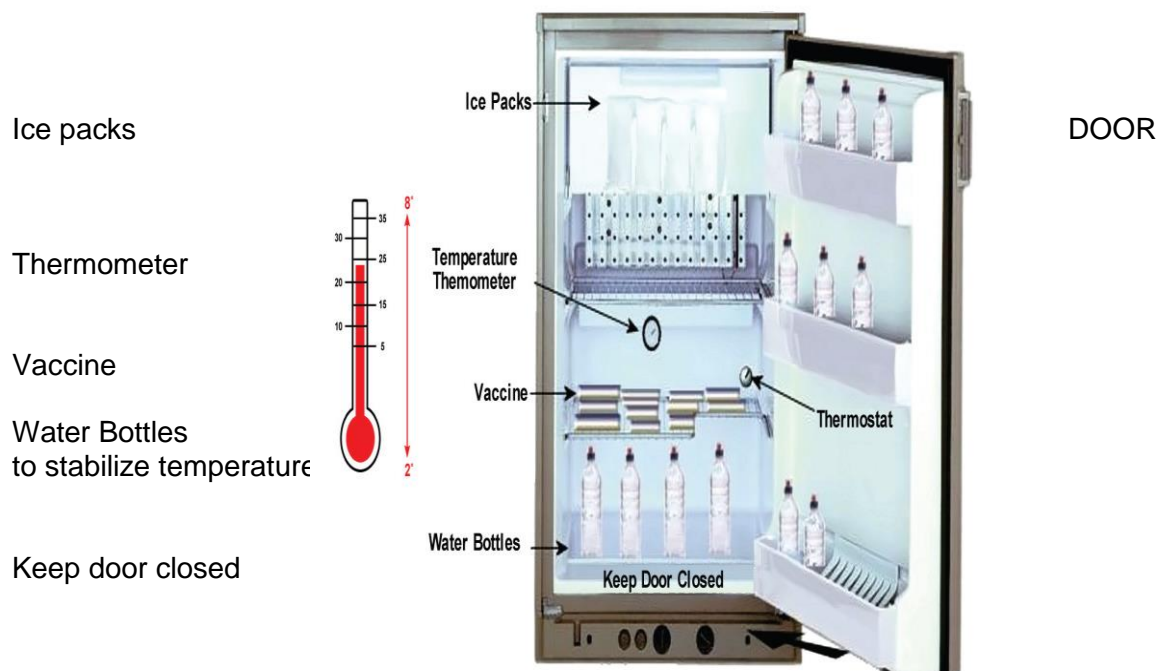
### **General Storage Guidelines for Vaccine**

- Regular household refrigerators or bar sized refrigerators are not recommended. Refrigerators used to store vaccines should not be used to store other products, such as food or other medical supplies or specimens. Vaccines should be stored in the central part of the refrigerator, with space on all sides to allow good air circulation.
- The temperature of the vaccine fridge must be maintained at 2-8 degrees. This can be verified with the use of a data logger or vaccine thermometer.
- Refrigerator temperature should be documented twice a day, morning and afternoon. Temperature monitoring logs can be found at: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/files/publichealth-cdc-temperature-monitoring-log.pdf>
- Do not store vaccines on refrigerator doors, or near the cooling units, as these areas represent the extremes of temperature within the refrigerator.
- Refrigerator doors should be opened only as often as is necessary, and for only as long as is necessary to replace or remove the product.
- Place bottles of water (1 or 2 L soft drink type) on the door, at the top and bottom of the vaccine in the refrigerator. This will help to maintain the temperature at a constant level (see diagram).



- Refrigerator plugs (and wall outlets) should be located in an area where they will not be accidentally unplugged. Alternatives include wiring the refrigerator cord directly into the outlet, or attaching a protective cage over the outlet and a sign *Do Not Unplug* attached.
- All refrigerators should be defrosted when there is an accumulation of more than 1 cm of ice inside the freezer compartment.
- All biological products are subject to deterioration unless stored under carefully controlled temperatures. The range for most products is from 2° to 8° C above freezing point and well below room temperature. Additional information can be found within the vaccine's product monograph.

## Diagram of Refrigeration Storage



The current vaccines available in Newfoundland and Labrador can be found on the Department of Health and Community Services website:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/vaccine/resources-for-health-care-professionals/>

**Note: For COVID-19 vaccine temperature excursions outside the temperatures parameters listed above, please contact [mirandaodriscoll@gov.nl.ca](mailto:mirandaodriscoll@gov.nl.ca) for further direction on vaccine stability.**

## **Resources:**

Phase 1, 2 & 3 COVID-19 Vaccine Priority Groups in NL

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/vaccine/prioritygroups/>

Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/vaccine/get-the-facts/>

Special Populations for COVID-19 Vaccination: Individuals who are pregnant, breastfeeding, immunosuppressed, or have an autoimmune condition.

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/vaccine/resources-for-health-care-professionals/special-populations/>

Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccine

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/vaccine/faqs/>

Department of Health & Community Services COVID-19 Website, Resources for Healthcare Professionals

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/vaccine/resources-for-health-care-professionals/>

National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI). Recommendations on the Use of COVID-19 Vaccines

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci/recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines.html>