



**NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

NLMA supports mandatory COVID-19 vaccines for health care workers

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St. John's, NL – The Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association is calling for mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for all health care workers. In doing so, the NLMA joins other national and provincial health care organizations that have called for mandatory vaccines for health care workers including, the Canadian Medical Association, the Canadian Nurses Association, the College of Family Physicians of Canada, and the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada.

Calls for mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for health care workers has also been supported by the New Brunswick Medical Society, the Federation of Specialist Physicians of Quebec (FMSQ), the Federation of General Practitioners of Quebec (FMOQ), the Ontario Medical Association, Doctors Manitoba, the Saskatchewan Medical Association, the Alberta Medical Association and Doctors of BC.

“Health care workers have direct contact with vulnerable populations who are at higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19. While some may not have direct patient contact, most do work in facilities that provide health care to patients. As such, all health care workers have a duty to help reduce the risks to patient safety and workplace safety,” says NLMA President Dr. Susan MacDonald.

The General Population

Physicians of the province are asking all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to get the COVID-19 vaccine if they are eligible.

COVID-19 cases are increasing across Canada and here at home. The Delta Variant is now the dominant strain accounting for most new cases. This strain of the virus is more easily transmitted and is more likely to result in severe disease than the original strain.

“The resurgence in COVID-19 cases is once again putting strain on Public Health’s capacity, due to increased contact tracing. If cases continue to climb and the number of hospitalizations escalate, it may once again affect the health care system’s ability to operate at full capacity,” says Dr. MacDonald.

“Anyone in the province who has not yet been vaccinated should do their part to ensure that health system capacity is not compromised and that frontline health care workers are protected. Citizens also have a responsibility to help protect those who cannot get vaccinated, including people with vaccine allergies, children and babies,” she added.

The greatest risk of transmission of the Delta Variant is among those who are unvaccinated as they are more likely to get infected and be contagious for longer periods compared to those who are vaccinated. According to Public Health, unvaccinated individuals are 12 times more likely to contract the virus, 34 times more likely to be hospitalized and 8 times more likely to die when compared to those who are fully vaccinated in the same age group.

“Eighty per cent of vaccine eligible Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have done their part. However, more than 56,000 eligible Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have still not received a COVID-19 vaccination. It’s time for unvaccinated citizens, who are eligible and able to receive the vaccine, to do their part as well,” says Dr. MacDonald.

“All citizens have a responsibility to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by following public health advice and getting vaccinated.”

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