

Thank you to all pharmacists who participated in the 2017-2018 Influenza Immunization Program. Planning for the 2018-2019 season has commenced, and there are important changes to the program.

Re: 2018-2019 Alberta Influenza Immunization Program Update for Pharmacists

Public Launch Date:

The Alberta Influenza Immunization Program will begin October 15, 2018.

Vaccine Products and Age Indications:

The vaccine product for the provincially funded program is Quadrivalent Inactivated Vaccine (QIV) for Albertans 6 months of age and older. The vaccine supplied will be Fluzone® or FluLaval® Tetra.

Age of Administration Changes:

Pharmacists may administer influenza vaccine to Albertans 5 years of age and older.

- Important considerations to note:
 - Children who are younger than nine years of age and have never received a dose of seasonal influenza vaccine require two doses with a minimum spacing of four weeks between doses.
 - A review of the child's immunization record can be viewed in Netcare.
 - Pharmacists immunizing children 5-8 years of age should be comfortable with appropriate restraint and distraction techniques and be prepared to respond to an emergency event (e.g. anaphylaxis).
 - Pharmacists must submit claims to Alberta Blue Cross within three business days. However, claims for doses administered to a child 5-8 years of age should be entered as a priority to prevent delays in updating the child's immunization record to ensure accuracy of the immunization schedule and history. It takes about two weeks for the immunization record entered into Alberta Blue Cross to be viewed in Netcare.

Supportive Living Facilities:

In previous years, Pharmacists have not been able to immunize residents in Supportive Living Facilities where Alberta Health Services (AHS) Public Health was providing the service. For the 2018-19 season, Supportive Living Facilities can now choose the provider they would like to use. Supportive Living Facilities have been made aware of this change and may reach out to the pharmacy connected to their facility with whom they have established a professional relationship. If the pharmacy is unable to provide immunization services, then AHS Public Health will continue to offer the service at the request of the Supportive Living Facility.

The 2018-2019 Alberta Influenza Immunization Policy will be posted on the [Alberta Immunization Policy](#) website and the [RxA Annual Influenza Education Module](#) will be posted by September. If you have any questions, please contact health.imm@gov.ab.ca.