

Professional Notice

To: Pharmacy Practitioners
From: Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists
Date: February 11, 2020
Re: Pharmacy Involvement in the COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout

The Department of Health and Wellness is working with the NSCP and PANS to develop community-based strategies for the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. Pharmacy practitioners will be playing an essential role in meeting the challenges of the largest vaccination effort in history. Prototype community pharmacy vaccine clinics taking place in the coming weeks will inform a strategy for the broader use of community pharmacies in Phase II of the provincial rollout. Details about the strategy will be communicated when finalized.

Updated Standards and Regulations

The NSCP has made changes to the [*Standards of Practice: Drug Administration*](#) so that what is expected of pharmacy practitioners when they administer COVID-19 vaccines aligns with Nova Scotia Health's established process for COVID-19 vaccination. These changes clarify that:

- pharmacy practitioners can fulfill their responsibility to monitor a patient's post-administration response by ensuring that post-immunization observation happens. Observation can be by someone other than the pharmacy practitioner, as long as it is in accordance with the established standard of care as set out in the [*National Advisory Committee on Immunization: Recommendations on the Use of COVID-19 Vaccine\(s\)*](#).
- CANImmunize Clinic Flow is to be used instead of the Nova Scotia Drug Information System (NS DIS) Immunization Module as the way to submit details of COVID-19 immunizations into the provincial immunization record for COVID-19, and that this also serves as the mechanism for notification of a patient's primary care provider.

The NSCP Council has also approved changes to the *Registration, Licensing and Professional Accountability Regulations* to exempt COVID-19 vaccines from the requirement to submit the dispense into the NS DIS. The NSCP is expecting government approval and posting shortly.

Provision of COVID-19 Vaccine in Long-Term Care Institutions

Some pharmacy practitioners have been contacted by long-term care (LTC) facilities to administer COVID-19 vaccines to designated caregivers. Practitioners are to contact PANS for direction before entering into an agreement with the LTC facility.

For clarity, pharmacy practitioners who enter into agreements with LTC facilities continue to be responsible for meeting the *Standards of Practice: Drug Administration*, including to ensure that:

- monitoring for post-administration response takes place, and
- patient records are created, maintained and stored in a manner that meets the requirements of the *Pharmacy Act* and regulations, and that they know who is responsible for the records and how to access

them. For clarity, these records do not necessarily need to reside in the pharmacy practice management system (PPMS; e.g., Kroll, Delta).

COVID-19 Vaccine Resources

It is important that pharmacy practitioners routinely search out information so that they are up to date on information related to their role as COVID-19 immunizers, including the provincial rollout plan, updates to vaccine monographs, and vaccine best practices.

There are critical requirements for the distribution, storage and preparation of the current approved COVID-19 vaccines. These vaccines are different than other vaccines. Pharmacy practitioners must ensure that they educate themselves on these requirements. There are numerous resources available to pharmacy practitioners to begin self-directed learning and they can also be used as a resource by the public looking for more information:

General Resources

- [Government of Canada: Vaccines for COVID-19](#)
- [Nova Scotia COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout Information](#)
- [NACI Recommendations on the Use of COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine Information

- [Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine Monograph Canada](#)
- [Pfizer COVID -19 Vaccine Information Sheet](#)

Moderna Vaccine Information

- [Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Monograph Canada](#)
- [Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet](#)

Webinars

- [PHAC Webinars on COVID-19 Vaccines](#) (new webinars will be added as they are recorded)
- Register for February 12, 2021: [Pfizer-BioNTech Product Monograph Update Sharing Session](#)