

Professional Notice

To: Pharmacy Practitioners
From: Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists
Date: April 1, 2021
Re: Update: Pharmacy Involvement in COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout

There are several important updates regarding the COVID-19 vaccine rollout that the NSCP is bringing to your attention.

Do Not Refer the Public to 811

The Department of Health and Wellness asks pharmacy practitioners TO NOT REFER patients to 811 to address COVID-19 vaccine issues:

- **Patients who have questions regarding whether or not it is safe for them to be vaccinated (e.g., immunocompromised persons) should not be referred to 811 as it does not have the clinical expertise to answer these questions.** Pharmacists are able to make an independent decision on appropriateness for vaccination for their patients who are within categories 1-3 as outlined in the [Nova Scotia COVID-19 Vaccine Program - Information for Health Care Professionals](#) (evergreen document) Appendix 1. Patients who fall within categories 4 and 5 should be referred to a specialist, vaccine consultant or allergist, as appropriate.
- **Members of the public should not be referred to 811 for vaccine booking. Patients must book online at novascotia.ca/vaccination or call 1-833-797-7772 (7 am to 10 pm, 7 days a week).** We encourage pharmacy practitioners to keep this number handy in order to appropriately direct patients.

Updated Nova Scotia COVID-19 Vaccine Program - Information for Health Care Professionals

The [Nova Scotia COVID-19 Vaccine Program - Information for Health Care Professionals](#) evergreen document was updated today, April 1st. Updates in this version include:

- Pausing the use of AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine in adults younger than 55 years of age ([NACI rapid response document](#)) ***new***
- Information regarding AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine-induced prothrombotic immune thrombocytopenia (VIPIT) ***new***
- Link to the Ontario Science Advisory Table's clinical guidance document: [Vaccine-Induced Prothrombotic Immune Thrombocytopenia \(VIPIT\) Following AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccination](#) ***new***
- Appendix 1 - Guidance for Health Care Providers - to provide informed consent for COVID-19 vaccination in special populations (e.g., immunocompromised persons and persons with underlying autoimmune diseases) ***update***

Additionally, updates have been made to the [Important Information Handout](#) for individuals receiving the AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD COVID-19 vaccine

Special Bulletin re: AstraZeneca Vaccine, AEFI Reporting Requirements

A [Special Bulletin from the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health](#) was released yesterday that includes important information on:

- recent changes made to NACI guidelines on the use of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine
- reporting requirements for adverse events following immunization (AEFI)

Important Information for Pharmacies Receiving US Shipment of AstraZeneca on April 6th

PHAC has released [critical documents](#) in support of the AstraZeneca (US) vaccine to be received April 6th. **Please note that no expiry date is printed on the vial(s) or carton labels. Regardless, immunizers must still verify the expiration date prior to vaccination:**

- The expiration date for the corresponding batches/lots can be found in the 'Products affected' section of the Health Product Risk Communication, by going to www.AZCOVID-19.com website, or by scanning the QR code on the US English-only carton label.