

Special Bulletin

from the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health



Date: August 20, 2021

To: Nova Scotia Health Care Providers (including 811/911)

Topic: Optimizing Protection against COVID-19 for Individuals Residing in Nova Scotia who have received Non-Health Canada Authorized* and/or Janssen COVID-19 Vaccines

The Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (OCMOH) recognizes individuals are presenting in Nova Scotia with proof of COVID-19 vaccination from the country where they were vaccinated.

The immunogenicity, efficacy and effectiveness of authorized COVID-19 vaccines vary. It is recognized that individuals remaining in Nova Scotia for an extended time (two months or longer) to live, work or study are more likely to live in congregate settings or work in settings where they can transmit COVID-19.

The Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness (DHW) is committed to ensuring individuals remaining in Nova Scotia for an extended time are optimally protected with safe and effective authorized COVID-19 vaccines. Therefore, in order to optimize protection, individuals residing in Nova Scotia who received only non-Health Canada authorized COVID-19 vaccines, or the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine are eligible for further vaccination with one dose of a Health Canada authorized mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. At this time, there are two COVID-19 mRNA vaccines authorized for use in Canada: [Pfizer-BioNTech](#) COVID-19 vaccine and [Moderna](#) COVID-19 vaccine.

DHW's approach for updating vaccinations for these individuals aims to balance the following:

- Optimal protection against COVID-19 helps to protect the individual and those they may interact with (including in health care settings, congregate living settings, educational settings, workplaces and the community).
- Limiting reactogenicity by minimizing the number of additional doses provided, recognizing the safety and reactogenicity of extra doses is not yet studied for a number of these vaccines.
- Provide a simple and straightforward approach that is easy to implement.

The [COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Policy for Individuals Residing in Nova Scotia with Non-Health Canada and Janssen COVID-19 vaccines](#) shall be effective immediately and replaces Nova Scotia's previous interim management document for this population.

- Individuals residing in Nova Scotia for an extended time and who have received one or two doses of a non-Health Canada authorized COVID-19 vaccine are recommended to receive, and are eligible for, one additional dose of a Health Canada authorized mRNA vaccine at least 28 days after their last dose of COVID-19 vaccine.
- Individuals residing in Nova Scotia for an extended time and who have received one dose of Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) COVID-19 vaccine are recommended to receive, and are eligible for, one dose of a Health Canada authorized mRNA vaccine at least 28 days after their last dose of COVID-19 vaccine.
- Individuals who are residing in Nova Scotia for an extended time who have not received any COVID-19 vaccines doses are recommended to receive, and are eligible for, two doses of Health Canada authorized mRNA vaccine.
- Individuals who have previously received three doses of any COVID-19 vaccine should not be offered, and are not eligible for, additional COVID-19 vaccine doses.

Individuals who are residing in Nova Scotia for an extended time, and who do not have a Nova Scotia health card, are eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccine in accordance with the criteria as above.

* Current as of August 17, 2021, non-Health Canada authorized vaccines include:

- CoronaVac/Sinovac,
- Sinopharm/BBIBP,
- Covaxin
- Sputnik V,
- Sputnik Light
- CanSinoBIO

Some of the vaccines authorized in other countries have been reviewed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and added to their [Emergency Use List](#) (i.e., CoronaVac/Sinovac and Sinopharm/BBIBP), some are under review by the WHO (e.g., Sputnik V and Covaxin) and others have not been submitted for review.