

October 2016

Dear Colleague:

Re: Influenza Vaccine Program 2016-2017

We appreciate your support of this year's influenza immunization program.

Who is eligible for influenza vaccine:

- All individuals over 6 months of age who live, work or go to school in Alberta, especially those at high risk of influenza-related complications.
- **We strongly encourage you and your staff to be immunized.**

What is new for the influenza vaccine program:

- **Three influenza vaccines:** Fluzone®, FluMist® and Fluad®. If an influenza vaccine is indicated as the preferred vaccine for a certain age group, it will be the first vaccine offered if available, unless contraindicated. If the preferred vaccine is not available, an alternate available influenza vaccine will be offered. Further details are in the full version of this letter at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/7082.asp>
- **Cold Chain requirements:** In March 2015, Alberta Health (AH) released the Alberta Vaccine Cold Chain (AVCC) Policy. It stipulates that ALL vaccine providers, e.g., AHS Public Health, community physicians, community pharmacists, must meet the conditions of the policy by September 30, 2016. Further details are in the full version of this letter at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/7082.asp>, and the policy is available at <http://www.health.alberta.ca/documents/AIP-Vaccine-Cold-Chain-Policy-2015.pdf>.

Reminder:

- **Egg Allergic Persons** - Egg-allergic individuals may be immunized using any influenza vaccine (inactivated or live attenuated) without a prior influenza vaccine skin test and with the full dose of vaccine, irrespective of a past severe reaction to egg. Egg allergic vaccine recipients should be kept under observation for 30 minutes following administration of TIV.

Where and When is immunization available:

- Influenza immunization clinics for the Public will begin October 24, 2016 at designated sites. Clinic locations and times are available from Health Link Alberta or visit <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/Influenza.asp>.
- Children 6 months up to and including 8 years of age will be immunized by AHS Public Health. Public Health will also coordinate immunization for patients and residents in acute care facilities, seniors' centres, lodges and assisted living sites.

If you are interested in administering influenza and/or pneumococcal vaccine in your office, Alberta Health Services (AHS) requires all Community Providers, including physicians, to sign the 2016-2017 Influenza Vaccine Registration Form in order to receive vaccine. The Form and supporting documents are available by contacting Teresa Sico at 780-836-7361 or for download at www.albertahealthservices.ca/2824.asp

How and When to Report Adverse Events:

- Adverse events temporally associated with seasonal influenza vaccine should be reported to your local Public Health Centre - severe reactions (e.g., anaphylaxis) within 24 hrs and all other reactions within 1 week.

How and When to Use Antivirals:

AHS NZ specific information on prophylaxis for influenza outbreaks in health care or congregate living facilities is available at <http://www.stg.albertahealthservices.ca/medstaff/nzmoh.aspx>, under the Outbreak Management section.

This letter and the full detailed version of the letter are posted on: <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/7082.asp>

If you have any questions about the influenza vaccine program, please contact your local Public Health Centre, or call **Teresa Sico at 780-836-7361** and she will direct your call as appropriate.

Sincerely,

North Zone Medical Officers of Health