

Date: Friday, June 03, 2016
To: Central Zone Family Physicians
From: Dr. Deena Hinshaw , Medical Officer of Health – Central Zone

Colleagues:

In the next few months, we will be designating a liaison public health nurse (PHN) for each family physician office in the zone. This linkage has worked well in other zones to supplement the connection between family doctors and Medical Officers of Health, and to intentionally strengthen local linkages and partnerships between public health and family medicine.

This liaison activity will begin with PHNs providing to your office some laminated copies of contact information for Public Health in the Central Zone, and an updated Central Zone Guide to Wound Tetanus Prophylaxis. Your office will be contacted by your local PHN at some point in the next several months to arrange delivery of this information.

Going forward, liaison activities could include:

- Providing/highlighting information about changes to immunization standards and updates to Central Zone processes,
- Facilitating immunization for physician and office staff. For example, Alberta guidelines for proof of immunity to measles for health care workers require two documented doses of measles vaccine, regardless of age. We recognize that a measles case exposure at an office with inadequately immunized staff could seriously limit the office's ability to see patients and provide care if non-protected staff and physicians are excluded from work, and wish to prevent this by proactively facilitating immunization,
- Providing information about cold chain and reviewing the requirements outlined in the Alberta Health Cold Chain Policy,
- Promoting the benefits of the physician's office as a community partner in immunization and both listening to and assisting to address their challenges in the process,
- Providing or highlighting provincial resources such as Healthy Parents Healthy Children resources, Ready or Not, www.immunize.ca etc., and
- Providing updates on provincial maternal child recommendations and Central Zone postnatal follow-up.

We hope that this new process is helpful to you to support and facilitate two-way communication between public health and family physicians. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me or my colleagues at the numbers below should you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Deena Hinshaw, Lead MOH Central Zone