

To: All PHSA Medical Staff

**From: Leslie Arnold, President, BC Mental Health & Addiction Services
Dr. Jan Christilaw, President, BC Women's Health Centre
Larry Gold, President, BC Children's Hospital & SunnyHill Health Centre
Dr. Max Coppes, President, BC Cancer Agency
Dr. Robert Brunham, Provincial Executive Director, BC Centre for Disease Control
Georgene Miller, Vice-President Quality, Safety & Outcome Improvement
Dr. Jana Davidson, Vice-President, Medical Affairs and Psychiatrist in Chief, Children's &
Women's Mental Health Programs
Dr. Johann Brink, Vice-President, Medical Affairs & Research, Forensic Psychiatric Hospital
Dr. Dorothy Shaw, Vice-President, BC Women's Health Centre
Dr. Niranjan Kissoon, Vice-President, BC Children's Hospital & SunnyHill Health Centre
Dr. Ivo Olivotto, Vice-President, Radiation Therapy, BC Cancer Agency
Dr. Marianne Taylor, Interim Vice-President, Systemic Therapy, BC Cancer Agency
Dr. Nicholas Foster, Chief Operating Officer, BC Centre for Disease Control**

Date: November 8, 2012

Re: PHSA Influenza Control Program Policy

As you likely are aware, all BC Health Authorities have introduced a new policy aimed at reducing the transmission of influenza from health care workers to vulnerable patients in our hospitals, health care facilities and the community. The policy includes the following key changes:

- All staff (unionized and excluded), volunteers, students, contractors and members of the medical staff (physicians, dentists, midwives) who have contact with patients **will be required** to be vaccinated each year.
- Those who choose **NOT** to be immunized **will be required** to wear a surgical mask during the flu season, which typically runs from the end of November to the end of March.

This policy change and implementation of the Influenza Control Program is fully supported by PHSA Executive as indicated in the attached memo from Ms. Lynda Cranston.

What is considered a patient care area?

- A patient care area is any area where patients may be in a healthcare setting. This includes all clinical areas, entrances, hallways, public washrooms or any other area where there are patients. All staff (unionized and excluded), volunteers, students, contractors and members of the medical staff (physicians, dentists, midwives) must either be immunized against the flu or wear a surgical/procedure mask while in a patient care area during flu season.

When is flu season?

- The flu season typically runs from the end of November through the end of March. The start and end of the flu season is set by the Provincial Medical Officer who makes the determination based on the volume of flu activity, meaning the season could start earlier than Dec. 1 or last beyond March 31.

Where are flu shots available?

- Influenza immunization clinics for health authority staff, members of the medical staff (physicians, dentists, and midwives), students and volunteers began Monday, Oct. 22, and will continue for the next six weeks. In addition to PHSA-hosted clinics, staff can receive their vaccines at:
 - Any health authority staff clinic;
 - Your family physician;
 - Community pharmacy; or
 - Public health clinic.

Pharmacy and public health clinic locations where flu shots are available can be found at [ImmunizeBC](#). PHSA locations and schedule for flu shots are attached below.



Acrobat Document

How do I Report My Flu Shot if received outside your Health Authority?

Make sure your flu vaccination is reported to Workplace Health if you **did not** receive your vaccine at a **PHSA-hosted clinic**:

Email: flushot@WhCallCentre.ca

Phone: 1-855-358-3580 (Toll Free)

Hours of operation: 0800 to 1600 hrs - Monday to Friday from October 9, 2012 until December 21, 2012

When reporting, include:

- Your First and Last name
- Telephone number
- Your Department or Program
- Site or program where you work
- DD/MM/YY of vaccination
- Where it was received (i.e. Other Health Authority Clinic, public health, physician, or pharmacist)

We do not need the name of specific vaccinating physicians or pharmacists; only that they have received a vaccination from one of these sources.

In the coming weeks, more information will become available relating to the 2012 Influenza Campaign. If you have any questions, please email influenzaquestions@phsa.ca. All PHSA Influenza Information including the Policy can be found at <http://www.phsa.ca/HealthProfessionals/influenza-resources/default.htm>

We thank you for your commitment to patient safety.