

Immunization Program Update

Immunization catch-up of school age children: Public health is actively identifying and immunizing school age children whose school immunization clinics may have been cancelled during the pandemic. Those children with missed vaccinations, based on our records, have been mailed an “Immunization Notice” outlining their vaccination history and vaccines still outstanding, and invited to be immunized by public health or at designated pharmacies.

Parents may also choose to have their child be immunized by their primary care provider; they are advised to call ahead to ensure their physician/Nurse Practitioner immunizes and the office has the recommended vaccines. Immunizing offices are routinely supplied with vaccines for infants and kindergarten age students (i.e. Tdap-IPV, MMRV). If you need vaccines for older children and youth, please reach out to your local community health centre to have a few doses of HPV vaccine (normally given to boys and girls in grade 6), Meningococcal Quadrivalent and Tdap vaccines (given in grade 9) on hand.

HPV vaccine availability to immunizing offices: We have heard from offices interested in maintaining a small stock of HPV vaccine in their fridge in order to immunize eligible, unimmunized youth (grade 6 and older) when they present. If you are interested, please add HPV vaccine to your next vaccine order.

Influenza Campaign, universal eligibility: All BC residents 6 months and older remain eligible for publicly funded influenza vaccine. Vaccine will be provided free to everyone and highly recommended for individuals at high risk of severe influenza illness, those capable of transmitting influenza to those at high risk, and people who provide essential community services.

Immunization records now available to BC residents on Health Gateway: Residents can sign up to access their personal health information, including immunization records, on healthgateway.gov.bc.ca. Children 12 years and older need to sign up on their own behalf. BC Services Card app is required and must be set up first. Information is available at gov.bc.ca/BCServicesCardApp.

The Health Gateway provides access to those immunization records documented via health authority electronic systems into the provincial immunization registry. Records documented within the primary care EMRs are not yet available in Health Gateway.

You can reach a Medical Health Officer at 604.675.3900 Toll free at 1.855.675.3900
For public health emergencies after hours contact the Medical Health Officer on call at 604.527.4893

Vancouver Coastal Health Medical Health Officers

Chief Medical Health Officer: Dr. Patricia Daly

Vancouver: Dr. John Harding, Dr. Mark Lysyshyn, Dr. Michael Schwandt 604.675.3900

Richmond: Dr. Meena Dawar 604.233.3150 | North Shore: Dr. Alex Choi 604.983.5701 | Coast Rural: Dr. John Harding 604.983.6701

To receive these updates by email please contact us at: VCHPhysiciansUpdate@vch.ca

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From the Office of the Chief Medical Health Officer

Please continue to support your clients with record requests for immunizations. When records for physician administered doses are provided to VCH (either by physician or client), we document them in the electronic registry so that VCH public health can offer subsequent immunizations based on history. Electronic records also then become available to clients in Health Gateway and clinicians via Care Connect Viewer.

VCH launches SmartParent: an Evidence-Based Parenting Support Program

SmartParent is a Canadian parenting support program that sends up to 3 evidence-based text messages per week to help guide new parents through their baby's first year of life. Messages are tailored to infant age and stage of development. The messages also suggest topics for parents to discuss with healthcare providers, and link them to resources and services online and in their community.

SmartParent was developed by researchers from UBC in collaboration with Optimal Birth BC, the BC Ministry of Health and BC Health Authorities, and in consultation with pregnant and new parents, practicing nurses, doctors, midwives and experts in maternal and child health. SmartParent is endorsed by the Canadian Paediatric Society.

SmartParent is now available to families in the VCH region. Please tell your patients about SmartParent and encourage them to enroll by texting **SMARTPARENT** to **12424**, or online at smartparentcanada.ca. Enrolling and receiving the texts is free, but standard data rates apply when accessing links/resources from a phone.

Program posters for your office and additional enrollment information is available by emailing VCHPrenatalProgram@vch.ca

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