

Operational Information Sheet for Public Health Units (PHUs)

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This information is provided as a resource for your PHU to prepare for the launch of the program. Please share this information with staff who are involved with the 2023/2024 UIIP.

A. 2023/2024 Universal Influenza Immunization Program (UIIP)

1. What programs are being launched for the 2023/2024 respiratory illness season?

The ministry will be launching COVID-19 and influenza vaccination campaigns for the 2023/2024 respiratory illness season. These programs will help to reduce the risk of severe illness that could arise from COVID-19, and influenza this season. More information will be shared regarding the COVID-19 fall program.

2. What are the distribution and administration timelines for the 2023/2024 UIIP?

The provincial supply of influenza vaccine doses purchased by Ontario is received in predetermined increments dependent on vaccine availability/timing from each of the manufacturers under contract through the national vaccine bulk procurement program. These quantities are received starting in late September and continue into October.

The full provincial supply is typically received from manufacturers by the end of October and occasionally into November.

Additional doses may be purchased by Ontario and brought in after November if required and if available from the manufacturer under the national influenza vaccine contracts.

As the province receives its influenza vaccine in increments, the initial influenza vaccine supply should be prioritized for public hospitals and long-term care homes (LTCHs) for the vaccination of hospital patients and staff, and LTCH residents, staff and caregivers. As the provincial supply is replenished, priority should be given to retirement homes and other congregate settings where there are other vulnerable groups.

Vaccine deliveries then continue more broadly to primary care providers, pharmacists and organizations. Health care providers can begin immunizing as soon as they receive supply, understanding that they will not be able to reorder vaccines until after the program launches and the provincial supply is replenished.

Providers should prioritize influenza vaccine administration as follows:

When immunizations start	Populations
As soon as vaccine is available	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Residents of retirement homes and other congregate living settingsIndividuals at high-risk of complications or hospitalization due to influenza*Health care workers and first responders
October 30, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">General population

*See Health Care Provider Qs & As: Influenza Immunization Information for the 2023/2024 Influenza Season fact sheet for list of individuals at high-risk.

3. When can program details be shared publicly?

Program details may be shared with health care providers within your jurisdiction.

Materials will be posted for the public and health care professionals on the Ministry of Health (the ministry) website at www.ontario.ca/influenza. The Vaccine Policy and Programs Branch, Office of Chief Medical Officer of Health, Public Health, will correspond with approved pharmacies, prequalified organizations and stakeholder groups to advise them of the posting.

To ensure consistent and up-to-date messaging, any media or questions related to the provincial influenza vaccine supply and deliveries (including delays) are to be directed to the ministry for a central response.

4. Which strains of influenza are recommended to be included in the vaccine products offered in the 2023/2024 UIIP?

For the northern hemisphere's 2023/2024 season, the World Health Organization (WHO) has recommended the following strains be included in the influenza vaccines:

Influenza Strains	Egg-based QIVs (including Fluzone® High-Dose Quadrivalent)	Egg-based TIVs (Fluad®)
A/Victoria/4897/2022 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;	NEW for 2023/2024	NEW for 2023/2024
A/Darwin/9/2021 (H3N2)-like virus;	✓	✓
B/Austria/1359417/2021 (B/Victoria lineage)-like virus;	✓	✓
B/Phuket/3073/2013 (B/Yamagata lineage)-like virus.	✓	

5. What influenza vaccines are publicly funded for individuals 6 months of age and older in Ontario as part of the 2023/2024 UIIP?

	Quadrivalent Inactivated Vaccines	
UIIP Abbreviation	QIV	
NACI Abbreviation	IIV4-SD	
Vaccine product	FluLaval Tetra	Fluzone® Quadrivalent
Age indication	≥6 months	≥6 months
Vaccine product	FluLaval Tetra	Fluzone® Quadrivalent
Manufacturer	GSK	Sanofi Pasteur
Vaccine type	Egg-based	Egg-based
Micrograms of hemagglutinin	15 µg	15 µg
Dosage	0.5 mL	0.5 mL
Format	MDV	MDV and PFS
Route	IM	IM
Most common allergens¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg protein² • Thimerosal³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg protein² • Thimerosal³

MDV = Multi-dose vial PFS = Prefilled syringe IM = Intramuscular injection

¹Any component in a vaccine may be a potential allergen. This table identifies the most common allergens.

² The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) indicates that egg allergy is not a contraindication for influenza vaccination and that that egg-allergic individuals may be vaccinated against influenza using the full dose of any age-appropriate product.

³ Multi-dose vial format only.

6. In addition to the QIVs listed in question 5, which influenza vaccines are publicly funded for individuals 65 years of age and older in Ontario as part of the 2023/2024 UIIP?

	High-Dose Quadrivalent Inactivated Vaccine	Adjuvanted Trivalent Inactivated Vaccine
UIIP Abbreviation	QIV-HD	TIV-adj
NACI Abbreviation	IIV4-HD	IIV3-Adj
Vaccine product	Fluzone® High-Dose Quadrivalent	Fluad®
Age indication	≥65 years	≥65 years
Manufacturer	Sanofi Pasteur	Seqirus
Vaccine type	Egg-based	Egg-based
Micrograms of hemagglutinin	60 µg	15 µg
Dosage	0.7 mL	0.5 mL
Adjuvant	No	Yes
Format	PFS	PFS
Route	IM	IM
Most common allergens¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg protein² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg protein² • Kanamycin • Neomycin

PFS = Pre-filled syringe IM = Intramuscular injection

¹ Any component in a vaccine may be a potential allergen. This table identifies the most common allergens.

² The NACI indicates that egg allergy is not a contraindication for influenza vaccination and that that egg-allergic individuals may be vaccinated against influenza using the full dose of any age-appropriate product.

Important Notes:

- Fluzone® High-Dose Quadrivalent is authorized **only** for those **65 years of age and older**. Fluzone® Quadrivalent and Fluzone® High-Dose Quadrivalent are different products.
 - **Please use caution when administering Fluzone® products to ensure that the right vaccine is being administered to the right person.**
- Publicly funded influenza vaccines must be administered by a regulated health professional who is authorized under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* to administer vaccines, or by a trained individual under a delegation made in accordance with the requirements set by the regulatory College of the regulated health professional.
- Trained pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, pharmacy students and interns may only administer publicly funded influenza vaccine to individuals 2 years of age and older.
- Publicly funded vaccine may be administered to individuals who meet the eligibility criteria for the UIIP (i.e. individuals who are 6 months of age and older who live, work or study in Ontario) and without contraindications to the vaccine.

7. Which influenza vaccines are different age groups eligible to receive through the Ontario UIIP?

Age Group	QIV		QIV-HD	TIV-adj
	FluLaval Tetra	Fluzone® Quadrivalent	Fluzone® High-Dose Quadrivalent	Fluad®
6 months to 64 years	✓	✓		
≥ 65 years	✓	✓	✓	✓

8. Which Influenza vaccine should an individual ≥65 years of age receive?

Please refer to question 5 in the Health Care Provider Qs & As: Information for individuals ≥65 years of age fact sheet and [Public Health Ontario's Influenza Vaccines for the 2023-2024 Influenza Season](#).

9. What are the recommended needle gauge and lengths for intramuscular injections?

Per the Canadian Immunization Guide (CIG)'s *Needle selection guidelines*, available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-immunization-guide-part-1-key-immunization-information/page-8-vaccine-administration-practices.html#t3>

Age and weight (if applicable) of vaccine recipient		Preferred Site of Injection	Needle Gauge	Needle Length
6 to 12 months		Anterolateral thigh	22-25	7/8" – 1"
13 months to 12 years		Deltoid muscle	22-25	5/8" – 1"
13 years+	Individuals weighing <130 lbs	Deltoid muscle	22-25	5/8" – 1"
	Males weighing 130-260 lbs	Deltoid muscle	22-25	1"
	Females weighing 130-200 lbs	Deltoid muscle	22-25	1"
	Males weighing >260 lbs	Deltoid muscle	22-25	1½"
	Females weighing >200 lbs	Deltoid muscle	22-25	1½"

10. What are the post-puncture shelf life and product dimensions?

Vaccine	Vial Format	Post-puncture shelf life	Package dimension (cm)
FluLaval Tetra	MDV	28 days*	2.7 x 6.9 x 2.7
Fluzone® Quadrivalent	MDV	28 days*	5.8 x 5.4 x 3.6
	PFS	Not applicable	10.4 x 9.9 x 3.8
Fluzone® High-Dose Quadrivalent	PFS	Not applicable	10.4 x 9.9 x 2.3
Fluad®	PFS	Not applicable	12.7 x 6.35 x 9.4

*Providers are to report all vaccine wastage.

- Return only unopened vials/syringes/ampoules to PHU or OGPMS (for Toronto clients) as wastage.
- Opened vials/syringes/ampoules should be discarded through biohazard waste.

B. UIIP Pharmacy Component

11. Third-party Influenza Vaccine Distribution

The ministry is continuing with third-party influenza vaccine distribution for pharmacies for the 2023/2024 UIIP. PHUs will not be distributing publicly funded influenza vaccine to their participating pharmacies. Pharmacies will be ordering and receiving vaccine directly from their wholesale distributor.

12. Temperature log submissions

Although Section 1A of the [Vaccine Storage and Handling Protocol, 2018](#) ("Health Care Providers Ordering Vaccine from the Board of Health") will not apply to pharmacies, the ministry would like to ensure a consist approach in regards to temperature log submissions or provider attestations within each public health unit.

Please see the attached document for additional information.

13. Pharmacy Suspensions

Pharmacy suspension may occur for the following reasons:

- Non-compliance with the User Agreement and/or vaccine storage and handling requirements, including non-submission of temperature logs or provider attestations.
- The pharmacy has ordered more doses than the weekly order limit. Details on ordering limits will be available at a later date.
- Pharmacies that have a % of remaining doses that is higher than the amounts highlighted in the following chart. The acceptable % of remaining doses at the pharmacy will decrease each month throughout the season. The ministry will provide weekly reports to both vaccine distributors and PHUs which will include the % of influenza vaccine doses remaining at pharmacies.

% of remaining doses at the pharmacy*	Time period
60%	November 2 to 8
50%	November 9 to 15
40%	November 16 to 22
30%	November 23 to 29
20%	November 30 to December 6
10%	December 7 to January 4
5%	January 5 to March 31

*adjustments may be made based on the early stages of program roll-out and uptake

C. Vaccine Management

14. Vaccine distribution plan

Week of	Activity	PHUs	Toronto	Third Party Distributors
Sept 25	Auto shipment of QIV, QIV-HD, TIV-adj	✓		
	Distribution to hospitals and LTCHs, including health care workers	✓	✓	
Oct 2	Auto shipment of QIV, QIV-HD, TIV-adj			✓ Thursday
	Distribution: 1. Priority to retirement homes, congregate care settings and other vulnerable population settings 2. Secondary to primary care providers and organizations	✓	✓	
Oct 10 (Oct 9 – Thanks-giving)	Place re-orders on or after this week	✓		✓
	Distribution to facilities and HCPs continues	✓	✓	
	Distribution to pharmacies			✓

Week of	Activity	PHUs	Toronto	Third Party Distributors
Oct 16	Vaccines orders will be delivered in accordance with OGPMS delivery schedules	✓		✓
	Facilities and HCP can place re-orders on or after this week	✓	✓	
Oct 23	Re-orders will be delivered and continue to be submitted and received	✓	✓	✓
	Pharmacies can place re-orders and receive deliveries			✓

Important Notes:

- Additional details will be provided on the timing of the launch of the general program.
- **No vaccine supply issues and delivery delays by manufacturers have been communicated to the province to date, but this could change as we approach/enter the flu season and would impact OGPMS delivery timelines and/or auto-shipment volumes.**
- OGPMS will not accommodate product-specific orders for standard dose QIVs.
- PHU orders submitted between the auto-shipment and October 9, 2023 will not be processed and will be cancelled. Additional orders will only be processed on or after October 10, 2023.
- Please ensure your vaccine auto-shipment supply can accommodate the needs of your jurisdiction until the week of October 16, 2023 by allocating accordingly.

15. Vaccine Re-Ordering Process

Vaccine Provider	Re-Ordering Process
PHUs using Panorama	Submit vaccine orders through Panorama. Please refer to the attached Delivery Zones and Schedules for OGPMSS clients.
Toronto providers, excluding pharmacists, within M postal code	OGPMSS by faxing the Influenza Vaccine Order Form for the UIIP to 416-327-0818.
Providers, excluding pharmacists, within K, L, N and P postal codes	Local PHU using the appropriate PHU order form
Pharmacists	Wholesale Distributors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McKesson • Shoppers Drug Mart

16. Influenza Vaccine Return Process

For the 2023/2024 UIIP, the provincial reusable vaccine return policy stipulated in the [Vaccine Storage and Handling Protocol, 2018](#) will apply to all influenza vaccines; specifically influenza vaccine will be accepted as reusable provided the vaccine has at least four months of shelf-life. However, it must be returned **no later than January 15, 2024**, unless otherwise communicated by the ministry.

The ministry has implemented a maximum vaccine reusable return threshold in the [Vaccine Storage and Handling Protocol, 2018](#). As per the protocol, reusable returns should be no more than 10% of the total influenza vaccine that was received per season.

D. UIIP Reporting Requirements

17. PHU Administration Reporting Requirements

PHUs are no longer required to submit administration data for doses of publicly funded influenza vaccine administered by the PHU. Reimbursement submission requirements still apply (see #21).

18. UIIP Administration Reporting for Other Facilities / Organizations (non-PHU)

The ministry no longer requires vaccine utilization reports from facilities that participate in the UIIP. Reimbursement submission requirements for eligible organizations holding public influenza vaccine clinics still apply (see #22).

19. Reporting Requirements for Health Care Worker (HCW) Influenza Immunization

For the 2023/2024 influenza season, LTCHs and public hospitals are required to report HCW immunization rates by **mid- to late-January 2024** to the local Medical Officer of Health. Once analysis has been completed, immunization coverage rates will be published by Public Health Ontario in the [Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin](#). Further detail regarding data collection of health care worker influenza immunization coverage rates for the 2023/2024 influenza season, including data collection forms, will be forwarded to the Communicable Disease Managers at PHUs across Ontario for distribution to public hospitals and LTCHs in the fall.

20. Violation Report

PHUs are requested to complete a Violation Report to document any incident that is in violation of the 2023/2024 Prequalification Form and/or User Agreement. A separate form should be completed for each "violation". Please submit completed forms to UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca

E. Reimbursement for Administered Doses (Community Clinics)

21. Reimbursement for Administered Doses - PHU

The ministry encourages PHUs to form partnerships with community agencies to establish influenza immunization clinics that are open to all members of the public. A clinic held in partnership with community stakeholders should have at least one public PHU staff member on site at the immunization clinic. PHUs who administer influenza vaccine through community-based clinics are eligible to receive \$5.00 per dose of publicly funded influenza vaccine administered. Any community-based influenza immunization clinics held by a PHU is considered a reimbursable clinic. Workplace clinics are not reimbursable.

PHUs may submit for reimbursement using the [Universal Influenza Immunization Program Reimbursement Form](#). Forms should be submitted monthly, with the total doses administered over the month. The form should be submitted to the ministry

by the 15th of the following month. Clicking the submit button on the form will automatically send the form to the ministry.

22.Reimbursement for Administered Doses – Other Organizations and Providers

The following are eligible for reimbursement for administering publicly funded influenza vaccine doses: LTCHs, public hospitals, Community Health Centres and pharmacies using health care agencies. To be eligible for reimbursement of doses **all** the following conditions must be met:

- The clinic is open and accessible to any eligible vaccine recipient (i.e. anyone who is 6 months of age or older who lives, works or attends school in Ontario);
- The clinic is widely advertised in the local community;
- Only publicly funded vaccine must be used;
- Influenza immunization must be provided free of charge to the vaccine recipients;
- Publicly funded vaccine must be both obtained and administered within the jurisdictional boundaries of the same PHU; and
- The ministry must not be billed for these immunizations through any other mechanism (e.g. Ontario Health Insurance Plan [OHIP], Health Network System [HNS]).

Please use the appropriate form per organization type as listed in the following table:

Organization	Form
PHUs, Long-Term Care Homes, Public Hospitals and Community Health Centres	Universal Influenza Immunization Program Reimbursement Form
Pharmacies using health care agencies	Universal Influenza Immunization Program Pharmacy Form

Forms should be submitted monthly, with the total doses administered over the month. The form should be submitted to the ministry by the 15th of the following month. Clicking the submit button on the form will automatically send the form to the ministry.

F. Contact Information

Component	Contact Name	Contact Information
General	General UIIP Inbox	UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca
Program Planning	Jennifer Lum	Jennifer.S.Lum@ontario.ca (416) 391-0832
Health Care Worker Influenza Immunization		
Pharmacy	Tsui Scott	Tsui.Scott@ontario.ca (437) 533-5056
Influenza Vaccine Distribution	OGPMSS - Customer Service Line	OGPMSS.MOH@ontario.ca (416) 327-0837

G. Reference Materials

23. Additional resources and information for the 2023/2024 influenza season

- [Canadian Immunization Guide Chapter on Influenza and Statement on Seasonal Influenza Vaccine for 2023-2024](#)
- Anaphylaxis Management in the [Canadian Immunization Guide](#)
- [Adverse Events Following Immunization \(AEFIs\)](#) must be reported to the PHU
- [Vaccine Storage and Handling Guidelines](#) - describes the provincial requirements that must be followed by all healthcare providers who handle publicly funded vaccines

24. Guidance for influenza clinics in COVID-19

- [Ontario Ministry Guidance for the Health Sector](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada Guidance for influenza vaccine delivery in the presence of COVID-19](#)
- [Immunization Action Coalition Mass Vaccination Resources](#)

25. Operational Resources (attached)

- OGPMSS Public Health Unit Delivery Schedules (to come at later date)
- UIIP Violation Report
- Temperature Log Submission Process for Approved 2023/2024 UIIP Pharmacies

26. Health Care Provider Qs & As Sheets (attached)

- Health Care Provider Qs & As: Influenza Immunization Information for the 2023/2024 Influenza Season
- Health Care Provider Qs & As: Influenza Immunization Information for individuals 6 months to 64 years of age
- Health Care Provider Qs & As: Influenza Immunization Information for individuals ≥65 years of age