



# Communiqué

## HPV Program Update

There are some exciting changes coming to the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) immunization program for the 2016-2017 school year. The publicly funded immunization program is expanding to offer protection for boys against HPV. The program is also shifting from grade 8 to grade 7 for all boys and girls and will continue to be offered by the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit through school-based clinics.

Expanding the program to include boys is consistent with the recommendations and research concerning HPV by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization.

Offering the program in grade 7 follows research that HPV vaccine prevents related cancers and diseases if administered at a younger age. The earlier schedule aligns Ontario more closely with the other provinces and territories that are delivering the school based HPV immunization program in earlier grades.

Effective September 2016, Ontario will expand the publicly funded HPV immunization program to include people who are 26 years of age or younger who identify as gay, bisexual, as well as other men who have sex with men (MSM) including some trans people (specifically, those who identify as MSM).

The program will continue to be delivered primarily through Public Health units. Public health units should also make the vaccine available by special release, upon request, to primary care providers and other community partners (e.g., community-based sexual health clinics) providing services to individuals who identify as gay, bisexual, and other MSM including some trans people in order to improve access for eligible individuals.



## Eligibility and Catch-up

Girls who were eligible for the HPV vaccine in Grade 8 in 2015-2016 but missed their immunization continue to be eligible for the publicly funded vaccine until the end of Grade 12. Arrangements for the HPV vaccine to be administered in these cases can be made by contacting the Health Unit.

Similarly, starting in 2016-2017, boys and girls who do not complete the HPV vaccine series in Grade 7 continue to be eligible to catch up missed doses until the end of Grade 12.

Boys who are in Grades 8 to 12 during the 2016-17 school year are not eligible to receive the publicly funded HPV vaccine. For non-eligible boys and girls, the vaccine can be purchased privately.

(Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, 2016, <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/ms/hpv/>).

The regular schedule for HPV eligible students is two immunizations 6 months apart.

Those students who initiate the series after the age of 14 or are immunocompromised receive the vaccine as a three dose series at 0, 2 and 4 months.

For further information as well as a printable Parent Fact Sheet, see the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care website at: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/ms/hpv/#skipnav>

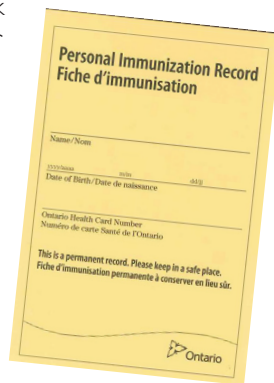
## Immunization Catch up Letters

The Health Unit, as mandated by the Ministry of Health, has recently sent out immunization reminder letters to children born in 2008 and 2009 who do not have an up-to-date immunization record in Panorama.

Suspensions for elementary students with incomplete records are slated to begin in November 2016. This allows plenty of time for those who are behind to make appointments to see their healthcare provider before suspensions would commence. As a result, you may need to increase your stock of Tdap-IPV and MMRV to accommodate the demand.

We have emphasized in our letters that it is the responsibility of parents to report their child's immunizations to the Health Unit. We do apologize for the increased volume of calls that you may receive related to our letters, but we thank you for your assistance in ensuring that our records are accurate and our students are protected.

**Please remind parents to report their child's immunization(s) to the Health Unit.**



## Cold Chain Reminder

Vaccines are sensitive products and their stability and efficacy may be affected by variations in temperature. "Cold chain" refers to the process used to maintain optimal temperatures between 2°C and 8°C during the transport, storage and handling of vaccines.

Please remember to record the minimum, maximum and current temperatures in your temperature log twice daily and reset the thermometer after each reading. Report any variations in temperature outside of the 2°C to 8°C range to the Vaccine Preventable Disease Program at the Health Unit at 519-426-6170 or 905-318-6623.

If you are planning to purchase a new vaccine fridge or are relocating the existing fridge, please notify us so that we may complete a Cold Chain Maintenance Inspection.

## Adverse Events Following Immunization

An adverse event following immunization (AEFI) is an unwanted or unexpected health effect that happens after someone receives a vaccine, which may or may not be caused by the vaccine.

Monitoring of adverse events is essential to vaccine safety in Ontario. All vaccines are extensively tested before use and are monitored for safety and effectiveness. By reporting adverse events, possible vaccine safety issues can be detected early to lessen health effects on those who need vaccines. Report adverse events to public health using the form found here: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/pdf/raefi-dmcisi-eng.pdf>

*Communique is a newsletter distributed by the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit for those who work in the area of Vaccines and Vaccine Preventable Diseases. If you have ideas or suggestions of topics for future Communiqués, please contact*



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