

Policy and Procedures Manual

RESPIRATORY ILLNESS (COVID-19 AND INFLUENZA) IMMUNIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

Health PEI – Human Resources		POLICY & PROCEDURES
Applies To:	All Health PEI Healthcare Workers (HCWs)	
Monitoring:	Chief Human Resources Officer	
Approving Authority:	Executive Leadership Team	
Date:	Effective: September 26, 2023 Next Review: September 26, 2026	
<p>This is a CONTROLLED document. Any copies of this document appearing in paper form should always be checked against the electronic version prior to use.</p>		

1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 Health PEI is committed to maintaining a safe work environment and to protecting its HCW's, patients, clients, residents, and members of the public from the risk of infection from, and complications associated with respiratory illnesses, specifically; the SARS CoV-2 virus, the cause of COVID-19, and influenza.
- 1.2 Vaccination and personal protective equipment (PPE) program requirements are recognized as a cornerstone for preventing or decreasing the severity of influenza and COVID-19 for those at high risk of serious illness or death from infection and related complications.
- 1.3 The most effective strategy for preventing COVID-19 and influenza is by way of vaccination. Masks can also serve as a method of source control from infected HCW's who may be asymptomatic. Masks may also protect unvaccinated HCW's from asymptomatic patients or visitors. Other important infection control measures that help to prevent transmission, include:
 - (a) Droplet/contact precautions (airborne precautions when completing aerosol generating procedures for suspected/confirmed COVID-19 cases);
 - (b) Hand hygiene;
 - (c) Cleaning of patient care equipment and the surrounding environment; and
 - (d) Staying home when ill.
- 1.4 Health PEI and HCW's have a duty to actively promote, implement and comply with COVID-19 and influenza immunization and PPE to decrease the risk of infection for staff, patients, residents, clients, and members of the public. Vaccination is not mandatory for current Health PEI HCW's, Health PEI strongly encourages compliance with the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization's \(NACI\)](#) position regarding fulfillment of the recommended vaccine series for COVID-19 and influenza.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Appropriate Liaison:	For HCW's, the appropriate liaison is their respective Employee Health Nurse or Occupational Health, Safety and Wellness team member , and/or Medical Affairs. For volunteers, the appropriate liaison is Volunteer Resources as per their respective facility. For students, the appropriate liaison is their respective educational institution. For contractors and businesses/entities operating at hospital sites, it is their primary employer.
Droplet/Contact Precautions:	Initiated by HCW's to prevent the transmission of infection when caring for a patient with COVID-19 or influenza-like illness (ILI), and when there is a risk of contamination of blood or body fluids. Includes: private room or spatial separation of greater than two meters; mask/facial protection when within two meters of a patient; gown; and gloves.
Healthcare Worker (HCW):	All persons involved in providing care and/or services within Health PEI facilities and programs, which includes all employees (casual, permanent, temporary, full-time and part-time employees), physicians (salaried, fee-for-service, contract and locum), students, volunteers and contract workers.
Immunization:	A process by which a person becomes protected against a disease through vaccination. This term is often used interchangeably with vaccination or inoculation.
Immunizer:	A health professional eligible to administer the influenza and COVID-19 vaccines under this policy and includes pharmacists, nurses, nurse practitioners and physicians.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):	Personal protective equipment (PPE) are items worn to provide a barrier to help prevent potential exposure to infectious disease. These items include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Gloves – Gowns – Surgical masks – Fit tested respirators (N95 masks, half-face respirator) – Eye protection (goggles, face shield, mask with visor)
Respiratory Illness:	Respiratory illnesses are categorized by the impact to the airways and the lungs that affect human respiration, caused by organisms such as viruses or bacteria that affect the respiratory system. SARS CoV-2 virus, the cause of COVID-19, and influenza are the two respiratory illnesses covered under this policy. Respiratory illnesses are expressed as fever greater than (38.5c)* AND cough and/or sore throat (in the absence of a known cause). Signs and symptoms of respiratory illness include; fever* or feeling feverish/chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headache, and fatigue. <i>* It is important to note that not everyone with influenza or COVID-19 will have a fever.</i>
Respiratory Illness Season:	Generally occurs during the fall, winter and early spring. Health PEI will determine and announce when respiratory illness seasons begins and ends to indicate policy activation and deactivation.

Universal Masking:	Refers to wearing a mask at all times. Medical masks are worn as source control to protect others or as personal protective equipment to the wearer. Universal masking is one of many control measures put in place to prevent the spread of infection.
Vaccine:	A substance used to stimulate the production of antibodies and provide immunity against one or several diseases, prepared from the causative agent of a disease, its products, or a synthetic substitute, treated to act as an antigen without inducing the disease.
Workplace:	Includes all property owned and/or occupied by Health PEI.

3.0 PURPOSE/SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to outline COVID-19 and influenza vaccine administration and management directions for HCW's, students, volunteers, employees of businesses/entities operating at Health PEI facilities, and contractors. Participation in COVID-19 and influenza vaccination programs reduces the transmission of COVID-19 and influenza and decreases the risk of outbreaks. It also ensures that immunizations are provided to HCW's pursuant to the Canadian Immunization Guide (COG) and NACI recommendations.

4.0 APPLICATION

This policy applies to all Health PEI HCW's.

5.0 PROCEDURES

- 5.1 Health PEI Executive Leadership Team determines and provides notice to all HCW's of when the policy is activated for the respiratory illness season and when the policy is deactivated. Policy activation is done in consultation with Occupational Health, Safety, and Wellness, and Infection Prevention and Control, considering Chief Public Health Office (CPHO) datapoints, and is based on respiratory illness surveillance data signaling onset in our communities and/or an increase in hospitalizations in confirmed COVID-19 and influenza patients.
- 5.2 Once Health PEI has declared the policy is activated and in effect for the respiratory illness season, HCW's comply with the following measures until the policy is deactivated:
 - (a) Universal masking is mandatory for all direct patient care;
 - (b) Wear a surgical mask when within two meters of any patient;
 - (c) Follow droplet/contact precautions when caring for a patient diagnosed with COVID-19, influenza, or experiencing Influenza-like Illness (ILI) as indicated;
 - (d) Follow routine practices, e.g., hand hygiene, cleaning of patient care equipment, and cleaning of the environment.
- 5.3 The procedure set out in Section 5.2 of this policy shall also apply to HCW's who receive, and are up to date, on their COVID-19 and influenza vaccination during respiratory illness season.

Accommodation Request:

- 5.4 A HCW may require an accommodation to the surgical mask requirement set out in Section 5.2(a) of this policy due to a protected ground under the *Human Rights Act*. A HCW who requires an accommodation must submit a written request with supporting

documentation to [Occupational Health, Safety & Wellness, Employee Abilities and Return to Work team.](#)

5.5 Immunizer Responsibilities:

The Immunizer:

- (a) Is accountable to be competent in the provision of immunizations;
- (b) Is responsible to review and/or maintain current evidence-based knowledge in performing immunizations;
- (c) Is prepared to appropriately educate employees in relation to specific immunizations, vaccine schedules, risks/benefits, adverse events, and post-immunization care;
- (d) Is competent to provide emergency care to HCW's in the rare situation of an adverse event related to immunizations;
- (e) Report to the Chief Public Health Office within 24 hours as soon as observed or reported of all unexpected adverse events following administration of vaccine using the Adverse Event Following Immunization (AEFI) form. This requirement is outlined in PEI's Public Health Act under Notifiable Diseases and Conditions and Communicable Diseases Regulations.

5.6 HCW Responsibilities:

All HCW's:

- (a) Are required to comply with this policy.
- (b) Comply with the PPE requirements, including universal masking, as indicated by Health PEI as it relates to COVID-19 and influenza.
- (c) Request an accommodation for an exemption to the universal masking or mandatory new hire COVID-19 Vaccination requirement.
- (d) Shall participate in the [HPEI Staff/Physician Respiratory Illness Reporting and Work Restriction Protocol](#) as required by Health PEI.
- (e) While COVID-19 vaccination is not mandatory for current Health PEI HCW's, Health PEI strongly encourages compliance with the National Advisory Committee on Immunization's (NACI) position regarding fulfillment of a primary COVID-19 vaccine series and subsequent recommended booster doses.

Mandatory New Hire COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement

- (f) New Hire HCW's shall provide a mandatory record of their primary COVID-19 vaccine series COVID-19 (2 doses + 14 days) prior to initial hire.

6.0 POLICY NON-COMPLIANCE

In accordance with Health PEI Human Resources policies, collective agreements and applicable legislation, and directives, HCW failure to comply with this policy may result in discipline up to and including termination.

7.0 DOCUMENTATION

- 7.1 Documentation of the HCW's immunization history shall be maintained in PeopleSoft, and the paper health chart (where applicable), to facilitate Health PEI reporting

requirements to the CPHO pursuant to the Public Health Act and the Immunization Regulations.

- 7.2 HCW's who have received their COVID-19 or influenza vaccine outside of the workplace are required to provide documentation of the received vaccine to Provincial Employee Health Nursing. [See Appendix A – Validation of Influenza and/or COVID-19 Vaccine Form.](#)

Valid Medical Exemption to COVID-19 Vaccination

- 7.3 HCW's with a valid medical exemption are not required to be vaccinated. Medical contraindication to the COVID-19 vaccine should be issued by the HCW's Healthcare Provider and filed in their employment file. [See Appendix B - Application for Medical Exemption Form.](#)

8.0 MONITORING

- 8.1 The Chief Human Resources Officer is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed every three years as per Health PEI's policy review cycle and standards.
- 8.2 Health PEI managers shall conduct a review of the COVID-19 and influenza immunization status of their respective HCW's to assess and promote compliance with this policy.
- 8.3 Notwithstanding Section 6.1, this policy is subject to regular review and update as guidance from the CPHO, occupational health and safety protocols, and public health information.

9.0 REFERENCES

Related Documents

Canada Immunization Guide
 National Advisory Committee on Immunization
 National Vaccine Storage and Handling Guidelines for Immunization Providers
 Immunization and Tuberculosis Testing, Health PEI Policy
 Immunization Regulations
 P.E.I. Occupational Health and Safety Act & Regulations
 P.E.I. Public Health Act
 Public Health Agency of Canada
 PEI Human Rights Act

Rescinded Policies

Influenza Immunization and Management Policy
 COVID-19 Immunization and Management Policy

References

Capital District Health Authority. (2013). Influenza Immunization.

Horizon Health Network. (2012). Immunization of Personnel.

Public Health Agency of Canada. (2013). National Advisory Committee on Immunization: Statement on Seasonal Influenza Vaccine for 2013-2014.

Public Health Agency of Canada. (2013). Routine Practices and Additional Precautions for Preventing the Transmission of Infection in Health Care.

Sunnybrook Hospital. (2014). HCW Influenza Vaccination Policy.

Vancouver Coastal Health. (2016). Influenza Prevention Policy.

Appendices

[Appendix A – Validation of Influenza and/or COVID-19 Vaccine Form](#)

[Appendix B - Application for COVID-19 Vaccination Medical Exemption Form](#)

10.0 STAKEHOLDER REVIEW

Group/Committee	Dates of Review
Legal Services	Sept. 15, 2023
Director, Occupational Health, Safety & Wellness	Sept. 7, 2023
Employee Health Nurses	Sept. 7, 2023
Human Resource Managers	Sept. 22, 2023
Director, Infection Prevention & Control	Sept. 7, 2023
Union Partners (PEINU, UPSE, CUPE, IUOE)	Sept. 22, 2023

11.0 REVIEW HISTORY

Review Dates:

Appendix A – Validation of Influenza and/or COVID-19 Immunization

Health PEI

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Validation of Influenza and/or COVID-19 Immunization

For all Health PEI HCW's

All persons involved in providing care and/or services within Health PEI facilities and programs, which includes all employees (casual, permanent, temporary, full-time and part-time employees), physicians (salaried, fee-for-service, contract and locum), students, volunteers and contract workers

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY INDIVIDUAL RECEIVING VACCINE

Name (print clearly):	
Date of Birth:	
Department/Unit:	
Provincial Health Card #:	
Employee # (if applicable):	
Name & Location of Immunization Provider:	

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER ADMINISTERING VACCINE

Date of Immunization:	
Product: Influenza and/or COVID-19	
Signature of Health Provider:	

Return completed form to an Employee Health Office ([Employee Health Nursing Portfolios & Contact Information](#)) or email a copy to: HPEIEmployeeHealth@ihis.org

Personal health information on this form is collected by Health PEI for the purposes of your care and for other purposes permitted by the *Health Information Act*, including the planning and management of health services. Your information will be collected, used and disclosed only as permitted by law. For more information, visit www.healthpei.ca/yourprivacy. Additionally, personal information on this form is collected by Health PEI under the authority of Section 31(c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and will be used for the purposes of tracking seasonal influenza immunization of health care workers, as specified above. For more information on the collection, use or disclosure of this information, contact the Director of Occupational Health, Safety & Wellness 902-218-7389.

Appendix B – Application for COVID-19 Vaccination Medical Exemption Form



Application for COVID-19 Vaccination Medical Exemption Form

I am documenting that _____ has a valid medical contraindication to receiving a COVID-19 vaccine and should be considered exempt from Health PEI’s Respiratory Illness (COVID-19 and Influenza) Immunization and Management Policy. Specifically, _____ has a valid medical contraindication based on:

- A history of severe allergic reaction (e.g. anaphylaxis) after previous administration of a COVID-19 vaccine using a similar platform (mRNA or viral vector);
- An allergy to any component of the specific COVID-19 vaccine or its container [polyethylene glycol (PEG) for Pfizer Comirnaty™ and Moderna Spikeval™ COVID-19 Vaccines];
- A history of major venous and/or arterial thrombosis with thrombocytopenia following vaccination with AstraZeneca Vanevria™ COVID-19 vaccine;
- A history of capillary leak syndrome (CLS) following vaccination with AstraZeneca Vaxzevra COVID-19 vaccine; or
- A history of myocarditis and/or pericarditis after a dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, with “serious” defined using the World Health Organization (WHO) standard definition: a AEFI that results in death, is life-threatening, requires in-patient hospitalization or prolongs an existing hospitalization, results in persistent or significant disability/ incapacity, or in a congenital abnormality/birth defect.

Previous diagnosis of COVID-19 and COVID-19 antibody test do not constitute valid medical exemptions for the purposes of the Health PEI Respiratory Illness (COVID-19 and Influenza) Immunization and Management Policy.

Given this contraindication, I recommend that _____ be granted medical exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine.

Healthcare Provider Signature

Date

Printed Name of Healthcare Provider

Date

Health PEI Staff/Physician Respiratory Illness Reporting and Work Restriction Protocol

Health PEI has moved into a state of managing COVID-19 as we do with any other staff illness. As we launch the Respiratory Illness (COVID-19 and Influenza) Immunization and Management Policy we will continue to experience waves of respiratory illness amongst healthcare workers and the following protocol will remain in place to protect our system, patients and most importantly our staff.

The protocol will allow us to monitor staffing pressures due to respiratory illness in real time to support operations.

As a result of these changes and pressures the following protocol is being maintained

Update Effective September 26, 2023:

Managers/supervisors/designates must complete the following online form for all staff reporting a respiratory illness:

The Health PEI Employee Respiratory Illness Reporting Form is available at <https://rstudiohiu.gpei.ca/form/contact-tracing/>. Please complete this form for all respiratory illness, influenza and COVID-positive staff cases, even if there are no workplace staff exposures.

The online forms must be completed within 24 hours

***PLEASE NOTE EMAIL ADDRESS - If you have any questions please contact:
HPEIEmployeeHealth@ihis.org***

Respiratory Illness Guidance and Work Restrictions

The 5 days isolation **and** the mandate to test for COVID-19 will no longer be required for staff experiencing respiratory illness symptoms. Testing is not routine for COVID-19 or influenza, unless clinically indicated.

Respiratory illnesses are expressed as fever greater than (38.5c)* AND cough and/or sore throat (in the absence of a known cause). Signs and symptoms of respiratory illness include; fever* or feeling feverish/chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headache, and fatigue.

** It is important to note that not everyone with a respiratory illness will have a fever.*

If staff become unwell during their shift, don a mask.

Staff with respiratory illnesses can return to work under the following circumstances:

- Symptoms have markedly improved and fever free for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication, such as acetaminophen. The exception is a cough which may linger longer than other symptoms.
- They feel well enough to come to work.
- They can adhere to work isolation restrictions: diligent mask use at all times, good hand hygiene, and eating/drinking alone. Work isolation restrictions will remain in place until 5 full days since their symptoms began.

Healthcare workers should be reminded that adherence to respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette after returning to work is always important. The importance of performing frequent hand hygiene (per the 4 moments of hand hygiene and contact with respiratory secretions) should be reinforced if symptoms such as cough and sneezing are still present.

Validation of Influenza and/or COVID-19 Immunization For all Health PEI Healthcare Workers

All persons involved in providing care and/or services within Health PEI facilities and programs, which includes all employees (casual, permanent, temporary, full-time and part-time employees), physicians (salaried, fee-for-service, contract and locum), students, volunteers and contract workers

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY INDIVIDUAL RECEIVING VACCINE

Name (print clearly):	
Date of Birth:	
Department/Unit:	
Provincial Health Card #:	
Employee # (if applicable):	
Name & Location of Immunization Provider:	

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER ADMINISTERING VACCINE

Date of Immunization:	
Product: Influenza and/or COVID-19	
Signature of Health Provider:	

Return completed form to an Employee Health Office (Employee Health Nursing Portfolios & Contact Information) or email a copy to: HPEIEmployeeHealth@ihis.org

Personal health information on this form is collected by Health PEI for the purposes of your care and for other purposes permitted by the *Health Information Act*, including the planning and management of health services. Your information will be collected, used and disclosed only as permitted by law. For more information, visit www.healthpei.ca/yourprivacy. Additionally, personal information on this form is collected by Health PEI under the authority of Section 31(c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and will be used for the purposes of tracking seasonal influenza immunization of health care workers, as specified above. For more information on the collection, use or disclosure of this information, contact the Director of Occupational Health, Safety & Wellness 902-218-7389.

Acknowledgment of Refusal of Immunization

(Pursuant to Health PEI Policy on Immunization and Tuberculosis Testing*)

Employee Information:

Name:	Date of Birth:
Position:	Employee #:

Health PEI values the health and safety of its health care workers and the populations they serve. The Public Health Agency of Canada (www.phac-aspc.gc.ca) identifies health care workers as a specific risk group. *“Health care workers, including other staff who work or study in hospitals...are at risk of exposure to communicable diseases because of their contact with patients/clients or their environment. There is also a risk that health care workers could transmit an undiagnosed vaccine-preventable disease to others...”* (<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/cig-gci/p03-work-travail-eng.php>). Health PEI is committed to developing and implementing measures in order to minimize the risk of occupational injury and illness in the workplace.

*The purpose of the Immunization and Tuberculosis Testing Policy is to ensure workers are immunized and screened according to the recommendations contained in the current Canadian Immunization Guide (www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/cig-gci/) and National Advisory Committee on Immunization and Tuberculosis Screening (www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/naci-ccni).

I have declined to receive the following immunizations, which my employer has been offered to me at no cost:

In declining immunization, I acknowledge the following:

- I am placing myself, my clients/patients and/or my co-workers at risk for contracting disease(s) for which immunization can safeguard against;
- I may be subject to work restrictions and/or work modifications at my employer’s discretion if there is a case or outbreak in my work place.

The employee health nurse/designate has discussed with me the nature and anticipated effects of the immunization(s), including the risks to me, my clients/patients, and other health care workers of not receiving the immunization(s) noted above. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and to have my questions answered. I am satisfied with and understand the information provided to me.

(Employee)

(Date)

(Witness)

Policy and Procedures Manual

IMMUNIZATION AND TUBERCULOSIS TESTING

Health PEI		POLICY & PROCEDURES
Applies To:	Health PEI Healthcare Workers	
Monitoring:	Director of Occupational Health, Safety and Wellness	
Approving Authority:	Executive Leadership Team	
Date:	Effective: October 19, 2009 Update Effective: March 21, 2023 Next Review: March 21, 2026	
<p>This is a CONTROLLED document. Any copies of this document appearing in paper form should always be checked against the electronic version prior to use.</p>		

1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 Health PEI is committed to developing and implementing measures to minimize the risk of communicable disease in the workplace through the healthcare worker immunization and tuberculosis (TB) screening program at no cost to them.
- 1.2 Healthcare workers (HCW) are expected to participate in the employee immunization and TB testing program.

Immunization and TB Screening Program

- 1.3 Health PEI HCW immunization and TB screening program follows the [Canadian Immunization Guide \(CIG\)](#), [Canadian Tuberculosis Standards](#) and the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization \(NACI\) statements](#). The following vaccines and TB screening are recommended for HCW:

- Tetanus-diphtheria vaccine
- Measles/Mumps/Rubella vaccine
- Varicella vaccine
- Hepatitis B (HB) vaccine - for employees at occupational risk (through potential occupational exposure to blood, blood products and bodily fluids that may contain HB virus)
- Influenza vaccine
- Baseline Tuberculosis screening
- Meningococcal - for employees at occupational risk; clinical laboratory personnel who handle Neisseria meningitidis specimens
- Pertussis vaccine
- COVID-19 vaccine

- 1.4 Health PEI immunizers delivering PEI’s publicly funded influenza and COVID-19 vaccines must administer vaccines under the provincial direction of Chief Public Health Office (CPHO) according to [PEI Health and Wellness; Annual Influenza Immunization Policy](#) and [PEI Health and Wellness, COVID-19 Immunization Policy](#).
- 1.5 The Employee Health Registered Nurse (RN) (or RN designate) is the sole authorized implementer of the HCW immunization and TB screening program and must meet the following criteria for program implementation:
- (a) Successful completion of; [Public Health Agency of Canada, Immunization Competencies for Health Professionals](#) and [Public Health Agency of Canada \(PHAC\). Infectious diseases. Canadian Tuberculosis Standards](#).
 - (b) Has their name included in the laboratory listing (and updated every 12 months);
 - (c) Is authorized by the Human Resources (HR) Executive Director to access PeopleSoft Immunization data base for inputting immunizations on health care workers.
- 1.6 HCW must provide a record of their immunization and TB testing history upon initial hire or upon request by the Employee Health RN or RN Designate at any time while employed by Health PEI for review to determine if current immunization and TB screening guidelines have been met.
- 1.7 For the purpose of reviewing immunization and TB testing history, the Employee Health RN (or RN Designate) requires HCW consent:
- (a) Written consent to access the Clinical Information System to review immunization records, serology reports and x-ray reports
 - (b) Verbal consent to administer vaccines and TB testing.
- 1.8 HCWs who have not been appropriately immunized, are at risk for contracting disease(s) for which immunization can safeguard against; may be subject to work restrictions at the Employer’s discretion
- 1.9 HCWs are advised that declining the baseline TB testing, may compromise their case management in the event they are exposed to active Tuberculosis through delays in appropriate contact follow-up.

Program Administration Roles and Responsibilities:

- 1.10 Health PEI’s Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring program implementation and policy compliance by directing the Executive Leadership Team to implement the policy.
- 1.11 Health PEI Executive Directors/Directors/Administrators:
- (a) Direct appropriate management staff to have:
 - Resources and processes in place for the implementation, monitoring, maintenance and evaluation of the program.
 - Ensure ongoing maintenance of employee immunization and TB testing documentation in PeopleSoft database and the employee health’s paper chart
 - (b) Direct program implementation using a phased in approach for priority groups.
- 1.12 Managers/Supervisors shall implement the policy as directed by the Executive Leadership Team.

- 1.13 Provincial Pharmacy Services is responsible for facilitating the purchase and distribution of publicly funded vaccines, TB tests and/or other products as directed by CPHO.
- 1.14 The Employee Health RN (or RN Designate) is responsible for:
- Maintaining current, evidence-based knowledge and competency in performing immunizations and emergency care for employees in the rare situation of an adverse event related to immunizations.
 - Appropriately educating HCW in relation to specific immunizations, vaccine schedules, risks/benefits, adverse events, and post-immunization care.
 - Reporting to the CPHO within 24 hours as soon as observed or reported unexpected adverse events occur following administration of a vaccine as per PEI's Public Health Act under [Notifiable Diseases and Conditions and Communicable Diseases Regulations](#)
 - Reporting all positive TB skin tests to the CPHO as per the [PEI Department of Health and Wellness; Tuberculin Skin Testing Policy](#)
 - Documenting immunization and TB skin testing history in PeopleSoft database and the employee health's paper chart.
 - Ensuring adequate vaccine supply is maintained and are stored according to vaccine [Storage and Handling Guidelines](#) and principles of cold-chain management.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Communicable Disease:	An illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic products which is transmitted directly or indirectly to a person from an infected person or animal or through the agency of an intermediate environment.
Health Care Worker (HCW):	A person involved in providing care and/or services within Health PEI facilities and programs. This also includes physicians, students, and contract workers (travel nurses).
Immunization:	The process of protecting against vaccine preventable diseases by administration of an antigen. This induces an immune response to prevent infection from that infectious disease.
Tuberculosis (TB):	An infectious bacterial disease caused by a species of mycobacterium which most commonly affects the lungs. It is most commonly transmitted from person to person through inhalation of bacteria.
Registered Nurse (RN):	Refers to the Employee Health RN, or the designated RN for employee health purposes at a Health PEI program or facility. See 1.5 for RN competency requirements.
Work Restrictions:	May include, but are not limited to, immediate administrative leave or temporary assignment to another work area.
HCW Immunization Program:	Completion of routinely recommended vaccine series and necessary booster doses following HCW immunization status assessment.
HCW TB Screening Program:	Program to see if an HCW has been exposed to tuberculosis or has a latent or active tuberculosis infection and to document baseline HCW TB testing results.

HPEI Immunizer:	A health professional eligible to administer COVID-19 vaccine and influenza vaccine under this policy. This includes pharmacists, nurses, nurse practitioners and physicians.
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3.0 PURPOSE/SCOPE

- 3.1 Health PEI values the health and safety of its health care workers and the populations they serve. Exposure to communicable diseases is a well-documented occupational risk for health care workers, and in turn, ill workers pose a risk to patients. This policy aims to minimize the risk of communicable disease transmission in the workplace.
- 3.2 This policy is in accordance with [PEI's Occupational Health and Safety Act which states under Duties of Employers, Workers and Other Persons 12. \(1\)](#): “An Employer shall ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect the occupational health and safety of persons at or near the workplace”.

4.0 APPLICATION

This policy applies to all HPEI Health Care Workers.

5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 HCW:

- (a) Provide a record of their immunization and TB testing history upon hire or request by the Employee Health Registered Nurse or RN Designate.
- (b) Provide a record of their COVID-19 immunization as per HPEI's COVID-19 Immunization and Management policy.
- (c) Participate in HPEI's annual influenza vaccination champagne as per HPEI's Influenza Immunizations and Management policy.
- (d) Meet with Employee Health RN (or RN Designate) to participate in the employee immunization and TB testing program.
- (e) Give verbal consent for Employee Health Registered Nurse (or RN Designate) to administer vaccines and TB testing outlined in this policy
- (f) If not consenting to vaccine administration and/or TB testing, sign an [Acknowledgment of Refusal of immunization Form](#) or [Acknowledgement of Refusal of Baseline Tuberculosis Testing Form](#) and have signing witnessed by the Employee Health RN, or designate RN, and filed in the employee's paper health chart.
- (g) Submit [Consent to Access Clinical Information System Form](#) to review immunization records, serology reports and x-ray reports.

5.2 Employee Health Registered Nurse (or RN Designate):

- (a) Reviews HCW immunization records, serologic testing reports, TB testing records and chest x-ray reports to ensure that they meet the vaccination and TB testing guidelines outlined in this policy;
- (b) Provides education to HCW in relation to TB skin testing, specific immunizations, vaccine schedules, risks/benefits, adverse events, and post-immunization care as appropriate;
- (c) Provides emergency care to employees in the rare situation of an adverse event related to immunizations;

- (d) Reports all unexpected adverse events following administration of a vaccine to the CPHO within 24 hours as soon as observed or reported using the [Adverse Event Following Immunization \(AEFI\) form](#)
- (e) Reports all positive TB skin test to the CPHO according to the [PEI Department of Health and Wellness; Tuberculin Skin Testing Policy](#) to be assessed for follow up using [The Positive Tuberculin Skin Test Report form](#).
- (f) Documents immunization and TB skin testing history and all immunizations and TB testing given in [PeopleSoft Immunization data base](#) or the employee's paper health chart;
- (g) Reports all immunizations administered to the CPHO according to the [PEI Public Health Act Immunization Regulations](#).
- (h) Ensures that an adequate vaccine supply is maintained and are stored according to vaccine [Storage and Handling Guidelines](#) and principles of cold-chain management.

6.0 MONITORING

The Director of Occupational Health, Safety and Wellness is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed every three years as per Health PEI's policy review cycle and standards.

7.0 REFERENCES

Related Documents

HPEI COVID-19 Immunization and Management Policy
 HPEI Influenza Immunization and Management Policy
 HPEI Order of Serological Testing for Employee Health Purposes Medical Directive
 PEI Health and Wellness Adult Immunization Detailed Schedule
 PEI Health and Wellness Annual Influenza Immunization Policy
 PEI Health and Wellness Covid-19 Immunization Policy
 PEI Health and Wellness Tuberculin Skin Testing Policy
 PEI Occupational Health and Safety Act
 PEI Public Health Act Immunization Regulations
 PEI Public Health Act Notifiable Diseases & Conditions & Communicable Diseases Regulations

References

Canadian Communicable Disease Report: National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI). <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci.html>

Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). Canadian Immunization Guide (current edition) www.phac.gc.ca

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Appendices

N/A

8.0 STAKEHOLDER REVIEW

Group/Committee	Dates of Review
Director, Occupational Health, Safety & Wellness	February 2023
Employee Health Nurses	February 2023
Director of Pharmacy Services	February 2023
CPHO Immunization Coordinator	February 2023

9.0 REVIEW HISTORY

Review Dates: October 19, 2009 February 17, 2012 October 12, 2016
 March 19, 2020 March 21, 2023 _____

Acknowledgment of Refusal of Baseline Tuberculosis Testing

(Pursuant to Health PEI Policy on Immunization and Tuberculosis Testing*)

Employee Information:

Name:	Date of Birth:
Position:	Employee #:

Health PEI values the health and safety of its workers and the populations they serve. The Public Health Agency of Canada (www.phac-aspc.gc.ca) identifies health care workers as a specific risk group. *“The importance of conducting proper baseline tuberculin skin testing for all potentially exposed health care workers in all health care settings cannot be overemphasized. At the time of employment, many health care workers may already be TST positive because of prior exposure, particularly workers born or previously residing in countries with high TB incidence who could have been exposed or infected before moving to Canada. In addition, older Canadian-born workers in some provinces/territories may have received bacilli Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccination, which can interfere with TST results. Prior exposure to M. tuberculosis, nontuberculous mycobacterial infection or BCG vaccination can result in a boosting phenomenon that is misdiagnosed as a TST conversion. The occurrence of boosting phenomena has been documented in 3%-10% of Canadian health care workers; therefore a two-step TST is recommended.”* (Canadian Tuberculosis Standards 7th Edition, 2014 pg. 386)

*The purpose of the Immunization and Tuberculosis Testing Policy is to ensure workers are immunized and screened according to the recommendations contained in the current Canadian Immunization Guide (www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/cig-gci/) and National Advisory Committee on Immunization and Tuberculosis Screening (www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/naci-ccni).

I acknowledge that my employer has offered baseline Tuberculosis Testing at no cost to me. I have declined to receive the baseline Tuberculosis Testing. In declining the baseline Tuberculosis Testing, I acknowledge that in the event I have an exposure to an active Tuberculosis case, the management of my exposure may be compromised. Individuals may have less extensive exposure but, if infected, are immunologically vulnerable to rapid development of active TB. Failure to obtain baseline testing can also result in long delays in appropriate contact follow-up when the index case is already known to be highly infectious. A fundamental difficulty is that transmission can be very difficult to evaluate when the background rate of positive TST results is unknown.

The employee health nurse/designate has discussed with me the nature and anticipated effects of the baseline Tuberculosis Testing, including the risks to me, my clients/patients, and other health care workers of not receiving the testing. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and to have my questions answered. I am satisfied with and understand the information provided to me.

(Employee)

(Date)

(Witness)