



Health and  
Wellness

Santé et  
Mieux-être



## Chief Public Health Office Policy

### Communicable Disease Immunization

<b>RSV Vaccine for Older Adults Immunization Policy</b>	Monitoring: Immunization and VPD
Chapter:	Draft Date:
Section:	Effective Date: September 2024
Subsection:	Revision Date: <b>August 2025</b>
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Approving Authority: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Record of Decision</b>	Approving Body: Agenda #: Minute #: Meeting Date: Next Review:
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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1. To protect Islanders who are at higher risk of severe Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) disease.
- 1.2. The purpose of the RSV Immunization Policy is to provide provincial direction to immunizers who deliver PEI's publicly funded RSV vaccine to individuals at risk of severe RSV disease.
- 1.3. To provide guidance for public health and other immunization providers to identify individuals who are eligible to receive the RSV vaccine.
- 1.4. This policy facilitates improved accountability to minimize vaccine wastage of publicly funded vaccine.

## **2.0 POLICY**

- 2.1. The Chief Public Health Office (CPHO) will provide RSV vaccine free of charge to individuals living in Prince Edward Island with a PEI health card and who meet the following eligibility criteria.
  - 2.1.1. The Chief Public Health Office (CPHO) will provide RSV vaccine free of charge to individuals 75 years of age and older.
  - 2.1.2. The Chief Public Health Office will provide RSV vaccine free of charge to the following individuals who are at higher risk of severe RSV disease:
    - Persons 60 years and older who are residents of Long Term Care (LTC) or Community Care (CC).
    - Persons 60 years and older who are admitted to hospital and awaiting LTC or CC placement.
    - Persons 60 years and older, who have been diagnosed with a clinically significant chronic health condition(s) as determined by the Chief Public Health Officer.

## **3.0 VACCINE PROVISION**

- 3.1 The vaccine will be provided to immunizers who agree to adhere to this Immunization policy.
- 3.2 The vaccine must be maintained according to vaccine [Storage and Handling Guidelines](#) to ensure adequate cold-chain management.
- 3.3 All immunizers must be familiar with the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization \(NACI\) statement](#) as well as relevant vaccine product monographs.
- 3.4 Immunizers must have access to client immunization record histories in order to review previous immunizations prior to administration as needed.
- 3.5 Vaccine is provided to First Nations Health Centres for those who meet the eligibility criteria.
- 3.6 As part of the publicly funded RSV Immunization Program, any immunizer must not charge a client for the administration of the vaccine or for the vaccine itself.

#### 4.0 REPORTING

- 4.1 Immunizers must keep records of all publicly funded RSV vaccine administered according to the [Public Health Act Immunization Regulations](#).
- 4.2 Immunizers must review immunization records and/or check the All Immunization Registry (AIR) for previous immunization prior to administering the RSV vaccine.
- 4.3 Immunizers must report to the Chief Public Health Office all RSV vaccine administered according to the [Public Health Act Immunization Regulations](#).
- 4.4 All immunizers must monitor the health and safety of individuals receiving RSV vaccine; immunizers must have protocols in place for management of anaphylaxis and vaccine must only be administered in settings where these protocols are in place.
- 4.5 All unexpected adverse events following administration of RSV vaccine must be reported to the CPHO within 24 hours as soon as observed or reported using the [Adverse Event Following Immunization \(AEFI\) form](#). This requirement is outlined in the [Immunization Regulations](#) under the [Public Health Act](#).

- 4.6 All **unexpired** and **unused** RSV vaccine should be returned to the Provincial Pharmacy under **cold chain management** prior to the end of RSV season. Please label the package with the clinic name from which the vaccine is being returned.
- 4.7 Expired RSV vaccine is not required to be returned under cold chain to the Provincial Pharmacy but must be returned at the end of RSV season. When returning vaccine to the provincial pharmacy label the package with the clinic name from which the vaccine is being returned.

## 5.0 APPLICATION

- 5.1 This policy applies to all immunizers who obtain publicly funded vaccine.
- 5.2 Those who administer RSV vaccine outside of the publicly funded vaccine supply are subject to the recording and reporting requirements under the [PEI Public Health Act and Immunization Regulations](#).
- 5.3 Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Chief Public Health Office. Those found to be non-compliant will have restrictions placed on their ability to receive publicly funded vaccines which may include withholding further publicly funded vaccine until there is evidence that corrective measures are implemented.

## 6.0 DEFINITIONS

- 6.1 **Cold Chain Management** - the process used to maintain optimal conditions during the transport, storage, and handling of vaccines, from the point of manufacture until such time as the vaccine is administered to a client.
- 6.2 **Immunizer** - a health professional eligible to administer RSV vaccine under this policy and includes pharmacists, nurses, nurse practitioners, and physicians.
- 6.3 **Publicly funded vaccine** - vaccine that is purchased by the Chief Public Health Office and distributed to immunizers without charge pursuant to this policy.

## 7.0 BACKGROUND

- 7.1 Vaccination is a safe and effective way to help protect against RSV disease.

- 7.2 Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common respiratory virus that accounts for a significant burden of disease in older adults. RSV disease can have serious complications for older adults, including hospitalization, intensive care unit admission, and death.
- 7.3 The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) released guidance on July 12, 2024, on the [prevention of RSV disease in older adults](#).
- 7.4 The goal of the RSV immunization program is to prevent RSV disease in older adults who are at increased risk of severe disease which may lead to serious illness and death.
- 7.5 The Chief Public Health Office participates in a pan-Canadian contract to purchase RSV vaccine and provides this free of charge to immunizers to administer to eligible individuals.

## 8.0 KEY SEARCH WORDS

- 8.1 Respiratory Syncytial Virus Immunization Policy; Immunization Regulations; Notifiable Diseases and Conditions and Communicable Disease Regulations.

## 9.0 CROSS REFERENCE

- 9.1 PEI Public Health Act; Notifiable Diseases and Conditions and Communicable Disease Regulations; Immunization Regulations.
- 9.2 National Advisory Committee on Immunization (2024). Statement on the prevention of respiratory syncytial virus disease in older adults.  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/vaccines-immunization/national-advisory-committee-immunization-statement-prevention-rsv-disease-older-adults.htm>