



## ORDER OF THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH OFFICER

(Pursuant to section 13 of the *Health Professions General Regulation*, B.C. Reg 275/2008)

### ***EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANTS INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION – NOVEMBER 4, 2022***

#### **WHEREAS:**

- A. On March 17, 2020 I provided notice under section 52 (2) of the *Public Health Act* that the transmission of the infectious agent SARS-CoV-2, which has caused cases and outbreaks of a serious illness known as COVID-19 among the population of the Province of British Columbia, constitutes a regional event as defined in section 51 of the *Public Health Act* (the “**Emergency**”);
- B. Over the course of the Emergency the public health and the health-care systems have experienced severe stress and been stretched beyond capacity in their efforts to prevent and respond to illness resulting from the transmission of COVID-19 in the population;
- C. On January 9, 2022, I made the *Regulated and Unregulated Health Professionals Emergency Medical Assistants SARS-CoV-2 Immunization Order* (“SARS-CoV-2 Immunization Order”) which permitted persons referred to in that order to perform Immunization Activities in the course of a SARS-CoV-2 immunization program approved by a medical health officer and in accordance with Specific Limits and Mandatory Training described in that order;
- D. SARS-CoV-2 immunization programs approved by medical health officers are currently operating throughout the province staffed, in part, by persons authorized by me pursuant to the SARS-CoV-2 Immunization Order;
- E. Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. Influenza spreads easily from person to person. Influenza can cause mild to severe illness, aggravate existing medical conditions, and sometimes result in other severe infections such as pneumonia, all of which can lead to hospitalization and death. The best way to prevent influenza is for a person to get an influenza vaccine each year;
- F. Persons infected with influenza, or who develop complications of influenza, will place further strain on the public health and the health-care systems generally. In particular, this strain will be on the health human resource capacity of the public health and health-care systems, which is already strained due to the Emergency;
- G. In order to best prepare for the twin threats of two serious respiratory diseases occurring simultaneously, vaccination for SARS-CoV-2 and influenza should be given at the same time. Simultaneous administration of the vaccines is an efficient use of strained health human resources;

H. Administration of both vaccines in public health clinics is also convenient for the public and will result in a greater uptake of persons receiving the influenza vaccine which, in turn, will result in fewer persons becoming seriously ill and putting further strain on the hospital, community and health-care sector generally;

I. I am of the opinion that:

(a) it is necessary to make this order for the purpose of responding to the Emergency because an increase in the number of persons infected with influenza will lead to an increase in the number of persons admitted to hospital which would, in turn, further jeopardize the ability of the health sector to respond to the Emergency;

(b) allowing Emergency Medical Assistants (EMA) to also administer influenza vaccines, such that influenza and COVID-19 vaccines may be administered in public health clinics by the same providers, is in the public interest because this approach

(i) is the most efficient use of scarce health human resources,

(ii) is most efficient for members of the public who wish to receive an influenza vaccine and a SARS-CoV-2,

(iii) the combined effect of the factors in (a) and (b) will result in a greater uptake of persons receiving the influenza vaccine and, in turn, reduce the incidence of illness and hospitalization of persons due to influenza, and the complications of influenza, which will lessen the demand on the public health and health-care systems and help preserve the capacity of those systems to respond to the Emergency;

J. Immunization against infection with the influenza virus includes one or more of the activities set out in column B of Appendix A (each an “Immunization Activity”);

K. For the purposes of applying this order to a particular Immunizing EMA:

(a) the authorized Immunization Activities are specifically set out in the entry in column B of Appendix A that corresponds to the EMA’s license category,

(b) for greater certainty, the authorized Immunization Activities specifically exclude the services (if any) set out in the entry in column C of Appendix A that corresponds to the EMA’s license category,

(c) the applicable mandatory training (the “**Mandatory Training**”) is set out in the entry in column D of Appendix A that corresponds to the EMA’s license category and the corresponding entries of Appendix B.

**I, Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer, order that notwithstanding any requirements set out in the Emergency Medical Assistants Regulation that conflict or may conflict with this order, an EMA is authorized to perform an Immunization Activity, subject to the following conditions:**

1. The Immunization Activity must be performed in the course of providing an influenza immunization program approved by a medical health officer with responsibility for the geographic area in which the Immunization Activity is performed.
2. The Immunization Activity must be conducted in accordance with the resources issued by the BC Centre for Disease Control (the “**Resources**”) posted at the following website:  
<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/resources-for-health-professionals>.
3. The EMA must complete all Mandatory Training before performing the Immunization Activity.
4. The EMA must be supervised, in-person or virtually, by a registrant who is authorized under a health profession regulation, and competent, to perform the Immunization Activity.
5. The EMA’s employer or a medical health officer must first assess the EMA’s competence to perform the Immunization Activity in a manner that is safe for both the patient and the EMA, including by requiring the EMA to demonstrate knowledge and skill, in accordance with the Resources, respecting the Immunization Activity. The EMA’s employer may only make this assessment if the employer is a registrant, or is acting on the advice of a registrant, who has assessed the EMA and who is authorized under a health profession regulation, and competent, to perform the Immunization Activity.

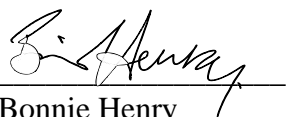
Unless repealed earlier, this order will end on the date that I provide notice under section 59 (b) of the *Public Health Act* that the Emergency has passed.

DATED THIS 4<sup>th</sup> day of November 2022

You may contact me at:

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SIGNED:   
Bonnie Henry  
OBC, MD, MPH, FRCPC  
Provincial Health Officer

DELIVERY BY posting on the BC Government and on the BC Centre for Disease Control websites.

## Appendix A: Immunization Activity, Limitations and Mandatory Training

Column A: Licence Category	Column B: Authorized Immunization Activities:	Column C: Services specifically <u>excluded from the authorized Immunization Activity</u> :	Column D: Mandatory Training (refer to the letters in Appendix B, Column A for information on the training resource)
<b>Critical Care Paramedic, Advanced Care Paramedic, Primary Care Paramedic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Initial patient assessment, including review of patient assessment forms to determine suitability of a patient for immunization and obtaining patient consent;</li> <li>b. Preparation of vaccines, including the drawing of doses from a vial.</li> <li>c. Administering an influenza vaccine via intramuscular injection or intranasal spray;</li> <li>d. Post-immunization monitoring of the patient, including monitoring for adverse events (i.e. anaphylaxis), situation assessment and treatment of adverse events.</li> </ul>		A, B, D
<b>Emergency Medical Responder, Emergency Medical Assistant First Responder</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Administering an influenza vaccine via intramuscular injection or intranasal spray;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Initial patient assessment, including review of patient assessment forms to determine suitability of a patient for immunization and obtaining patient consent;</li> </ul>	A, B, D

<b>Column A: Licence Category</b>	<b>Column B: Authorized Immunization Activities:</b>	<b>Column C: Services specifically <u>excluded</u> from the authorized <u>Immunization</u> <u>Activity</u>:</b>	<b>Column D: Mandatory Training (refer to the letters in Appendix B, Column A for information on the training resource)</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Preparation of vaccines, including the drawing of doses from a vial;</li> <li>c. Post-immunization monitoring of the patient, including monitoring for adverse events (i.e. anaphylaxis), situation assessment and treatment of adverse events.</li> </ul>	

## Appendix B: Training Materials

Column A: Training	Column B: Resources	Column C: Link to Materials
A	BC Centre for Disease Control’s Influenza Immunization Competency Course	<a href="https://learninghub.phsa.ca/Courses/19654/">https://learninghub.phsa.ca/Courses/19654/</a>
B	In-person education and clinical lab training to perform intramuscular injections as per the BC Centre for Disease Control’s – Influenza Immunization Skills Checklist	<a href="http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Immunization/Vaccine%20Safety/INFLUENZA-IMMUNIZATION-SKILLS-CHECKLIST.pdf">http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Immunization/Vaccine%20Safety/INFLUENZA-IMMUNIZATION-SKILLS-CHECKLIST.pdf</a>
C	BC Centre for Disease Control’s Seasonal Influenza Update	<a href="https://learninghub.phsa.ca/Courses/29136/">https://learninghub.phsa.ca/Courses/29136/</a>
D	Anaphylaxis Initial Emergency Treatment by Nurses (Adult & Pediatric)	<a href="https://learninghub.phsa.ca/Courses/19708/">https://learninghub.phsa.ca/Courses/19708/</a>