

Alberta COVID-19 Pharmacy Immunization Program (ACPIP) update—March 29, 2021

Alberta Health is working hard to have the Federal government bring as much vaccine into the province as quickly as possible and distribute it to community pharmacies. The storage and distribution requirements of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, coupled with the unpredictable supply, have limited the number of pharmacies able to participate compared with the number who have expressed interest in participating.

Unexpected delays along the way have made this even more challenging for everyone and we thank all pharmacies and their support staff for their understanding. The only pharmacies that will have additional vaccines arriving this week are those using the Pfizer product in Calgary, Edmonton and Red Deer. Pharmacies that are using the Moderna vaccine will not have vaccines arriving this week. Alberta Health would like to acknowledge your professionalism and dedication in supporting our communities to provide COVID-19 vaccine despite ongoing supply challenges.

Albertans are being immunized as fast as supply allows. This is happening in phases so people most at risk are immunized first. As we get more vaccine supply, more groups will be opened up to be eligible.

As demand from Phase 2A eligible Albertans (born 1947 to 1956) for the COVID-19 vaccine has been declining in some areas of the province, but still remains high in others, it is critical to ensure that existing vaccine inventory and scheduled shipments are used as efficiently as possible.

Therefore, a decision has been made by Alberta Health to rollout a portion of Phase 2B of the COVID-19 immunization program to ensure all available vaccine in Alberta is administered within one week of its arrival. This change will be communicated to Albertans through a Government of Alberta news release today March 29, 2021.

Phase 2B rollout

Starting March 30, **only those born in 1957 to 1963 who have a chronic medical condition are eligible to book an appointment.** Albertans will self-identify to the pharmacy that they are eligible to be immunized if they fall within the list of eligible chronic conditions. You can view this list at <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid19-vaccine-phase-2B-eligibility-fact-sheet.pdf>

Pharmacies are NOT expected to validate the presence of a chronic condition for eligibility in this category. We will be operating on the honor system where patients will be asked to attest that they have one or more of the eligible conditions. However, Albertans may want to talk to you to understand if their condition is on this list.

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As a reminder, if a pharmacy receives a request for an appointment from an Albertan that was eligible in Phase 1A, 1B or 2A, **priority should be given to these Albertans, as these individuals remain at greatest risk.**

Alberta Health Services is planning to launch appointment bookings for Phase 2B on April 5, 2021, and details on the further expansion of this eligibility group will be provided in the coming days.

As with previous phases, proof of age and Personal Health Number are required to be presented to the pharmacy at the time of appointment.

If you are a participating pharmacy, please ensure that you report information about your booked COVID-19 vaccine appointments, including your next available appointment, to Alberta Health daily through the COVID Vaccine Appointment Reporting portal. This will assist with managing Albertan's expectations of appointment availability.

For assistance with benefit or claim inquiries, please contact an Alberta Blue Cross Pharmacy Services Provider Relations contact centre representative at

780-498-8370 (Edmonton and area)

403-294-4041 (Calgary and area)

1-800-361-9632 (toll free)

FAX 780-498-8406 (Edmonton and area)

FAX 1-877-305-9911 (toll free)

Alberta Blue Cross offers online access to current Pharmacy Benefacts and supplemental claiming information to assist with the submission of your direct bill drug claims.

Visit ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php

