

Calgary Zone

COVID-19 UPDATES



Calgary Zone PCN webinar

On Monday, Feb. 1 at 6 p.m., the next two-hour webinar in the Calgary Zone series will highlight the vital role family practice can play in promoting immunization.

Dr. Rick Ward and Dr. Christine Luelo will share the results of a patient survey and lead a discussion about what clinics can do to counter vaccine hesitancy.

Dr. Cora Constantinescu will present on the science of encouraging immunization and there will be an update on the AHS campaign and what it means for family physicians and staff.

The mental health moment feature will be a presentation on managing alcohol use disorder.

[Register](#)

Vaccine supply disruption

A temporary reduction in shipments to Canada of the Pfizer vaccine has [disrupted](#) Alberta's planned rollout:

- New first dose appointments are postponed
- Some second dose appointments will be rescheduled

Originally, Pfizer shipments were expected to be cut by 20 per cent to 80 per cent over the coming weeks. Then it was announced there would be no doses next week and expected reductions in February.

Vaccine doses have been allocated to provide second doses to all long-term care and designated supportive living residents. The province believes AHS will be able to provide second doses to eligible healthcare workers, but supply uncertainty may impact rollout.

Once supply increases, vaccinations will expand to seniors 75 and older and persons 65 and over living in First Nations communities or Metis Settlements.

Overcoming vaccine hesitancy

AHS has compiled multiple resources to support physicians' discussions with patients who are hesitant to receive the vaccine when it is available: an AHS fact sheet and two resources from the Centre for Effective Practice.

The AHS COVID-19 vaccination [fact sheet](#) has general information on:

- The vaccines and how well they work
- Side effects and how to manage them
- COVID-19

A [guide](#) for healthcare providers answering questions about the COVID-19 vaccines from the Centre for Effective Practice has evidence-based responses to common questions from patients and points of resistance such as:

- I don't need a vaccine; COVID-19 isn't that bad.
- Were steps skipped to rush the vaccine's production and approval?
- I want to wait and see what happens to others who are vaccinated first.

Also from the centre, the [PrOTCT plan](#) for COVID-19 vaccine discussions provides a framework, including talking points and resources, for effective conversations that share important information and build trust.

It outlines a five-step approach to achieve a positive interaction: proactively start the conversation, offer to share your knowledge of the vaccine, tailor recommendations to the patient, address specific concerns, and talk through a plan for them to get vaccinated.

[19 to Zero](#) is another online resource to shift public perceptions around COVID-19 behaviours and vaccinations.

Pediatricians added to booking tool

Effective immediately, Albertans can select their [child's pediatrician](#) as their primary care provider when scheduling a COVID-19 test using the online booking and [assessment tool](#).

Only one primary care provider receives the test results. If their pediatrician is selected:

- The pediatrician will receive the test results
- The child's other providers, such as their family physician, will not

Until Friday, Jan. 15, only family physicians and nurse practitioners were listed in the tool.

Post-COVID-19 Respiratory Clinic

The [Post-COVID-19 Respiratory Clinic](#) at the Rockyview General Hospital offers clinical evaluation and management of patients with COVID-19 and persistent respiratory symptoms at least eight weeks after the positive test.

Eligibility criteria and exclusions:

- Patients experiencing new post-COVID-19 chronic respiratory concerns, persistent for eight or more weeks since diagnosis
- Patients without respiratory symptoms should be referred to the appropriate specialty for their symptoms — not the respiratory clinic

Referrals:

- Primary care can refer through pulmonary central triage (PCAT) via eReferral on Netcare, fax or, if unsure, call a pulmonary colleague through [Specialist LINK](#) for advice.

Quick links

Expanded second dose window

Alberta [expanded the window](#) to offer second doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to within 42 days of the first shot in alignment with recommendations by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization and the World Health Organization's statements on the vaccines.

The Shadow Pandemic (Part 2) webinar

On Wednesday, Feb. 10 at 7 p.m., the U of C's COVID Corner series will host the two-hour second part of The Shadow Pandemic webinar. [Register](#)

Vaccine webinar recordings

Review the AMA's 55-minute webinar on vaccines, [COVID Talks for Docs](#), or the CFPC's 65-minute [vaccine update](#) for family physicians, which also shared the [19 to Zero](#) website as a resource.