

October 4, 2019

Public School Superintendents and Principals of Independent Schools

Re: School Immunization Program Updates

The purpose of this letter is to provide information about the 2019/2020 school immunization program. This year, Interior Health (IH) will be taking on several new initiatives as part of the provincial [Vaccine Status Reporting Regulation](#) (VSRR). In addition to these new initiatives, we will continue to provide the annual routine school immunization program for students in grades 6 and 9.

Additional information about these upcoming initiatives is attached; we request that you share this information with your schools.

If there are any questions or concerns, please contact Interior Health's Immunization Program at ImmunizationProgram@interiorhealth.ca.

VACCINE STATUS REPORTING REGULATION

On July 1, 2019, the B.C. Government approved the Vaccination Status Reporting Regulation under the Public Health Act. This regulation requires that parents or guardians report the vaccination status of their school-aged children to their local health authority.

Collection of records and student privacy

- Schools are not expected to contact parents and request student records. Parents and guardians are responsible for gathering and providing missing immunization records.
- Missing records can be provided to a [local public health centre](#) or the child's school for collection by the school nurse. Records provided to the school nurse must be provided in a sealed envelope. If parents/guardians provide loose immunization records, school staff are asked to provide parents with an envelope to place records in and seal. Immunization records are then to be stored in a secure compartment until they can be picked up by the school nurse. Schools are required to report any breaches of privacy and provide details of corrective actions taken to the School Nurse. Privacy breaches are reviewed by the IH Risk & Privacy Department.

Catch-up immunizations

- In addition to updating missing and incomplete records, Interior Health will be providing catch-up immunizations to students in kindergarten, grade 1, 6, 9, 11, and 12 for the upcoming year.
- Catch-up immunizations will be provided in public health centres or school clinics depending on the area and age of students.

2019/2020 SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION CLINICS

There have been no vaccine changes to the annual school immunization program for grade 6 and 9 students. The routine school vaccines are:

- **Grade 6:** Hepatitis B, HPV9 (Gardasil®9) and Varicella
- **Grade 9:** Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis (Tdap) and Meningococcal Quadrivalent

School nurses will be approaching school principals to discuss organizing school clinics for annual routine immunizations and catch-up immunizations and the type of space that is required.

Consent packages and student privacy

- Consent packages for all school immunization clinics (annual grade 6 and 9 immunizations, as well as new catch-up clinics) will be provided to schools by Interior Health. Parents/students are asked to return signed consent forms sealed in the envelopes provided. If parents/students provide loose consent forms, school staff are asked to provide them with an envelope to place consent forms in and seal.
- Returned consent packages are to be stored in a secure compartment until they can be picked up by the school nurse. Schools are required to report any breaches of privacy and provide details of corrective actions taken to the School Nurse. Privacy breaches are reviewed by the IH Risk & Privacy Department.

Mature Minor Consent (MMC)

- Students in grades 9, 11, and 12 can provide Mature Minor Consent to immunization as per the legislation under the Infants Act. MMC stipulates that a youth who demonstrates an understanding of the benefits and risks of a health service can consent or refuse that service **independent of a parent or representative**. Additional information can be found at <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/infants-act-mature-minor-consent-and-immunization>

KIDS BOOST IMMUNITY

A new lesson has been developed to assist grade 6 teachers in preparing their students for school immunization clinics. You can view the lesson here: <https://kidsboostimmunity.com/immunizationlesson>.

A handout will be given to grade 6 teachers when the consent packages for annual school immunization clinics are distributed to the schools. We encourage teachers to do the lesson and quiz before vaccination day, around the time the consent forms go home. The handout can be viewed at <https://kidsboostimmunity.com/teachers/immunizationday>.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Silvina Mema in black ink.

Silvina Mema, MD MSc FRCPC
Medical Health Officer

Handwritten signature of Issy Aguiar in black ink.

Issy Aguiar
Manager, Immunization Program

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