

October 15, 2021

Dear Parent/Legal Guardian

RE: School Vaccine Program Update

Since the Spring of 2020, the school vaccination program has been suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Public Health will be restarting the program on November 1, 2021. Appointments will open for booking on October 18, 2021. Most clinics will be outside of school and work hours at Public Health offices located at 99 Regina Street South, Waterloo and 150 Main Street, Cambridge.

Planning is also underway to reach students who may not be able to access the two Public Health fixed clinic locations. Details about additional mobile clinics will be communicated as soon as they are finalized.

If your child is in Grade 7, 8 or 9 during the 2021/2022 school year, they are eligible to receive their school program vaccines or complete the series if they have already started them.

If you have previously declined these immunizations or have a legal exemption on file at Public Health, please disregard this letter.

Typically, each school year, Grade 7 students have an opportunity to receive the following three vaccines in school-based clinics. Please note that meningococcal ACYW-135 vaccine is required for school attendance under the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA). Although the Immunization of School Pupils Act has not been enforced during the COVID-19 pandemic, students' immunization records will be reviewed in the future for vaccines required by the Act.

- Hepatitis B (2 dose series)
- Meningococcal ACYW-135 (Menactra®)
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV) (Gardasil®-9) (2 dose series)

Please note that Hepatitis B and HPV vaccines require 2 doses to fully protect against these diseases. Menactra® is provided as a one-time dose and a second dose is not required to complete vaccination. Some children may have already received a meningococcal vaccine prior to age 12 (usually at 1 year of age). The grade 7 immunization with Menactra® is still recommended to provide protection against strains not included in the earlier vaccine.

Next Steps:

If you wish to have your student complete these vaccinations, please do the following:

1. Ensure your students' vaccination records are up to date:
 - Before booking an appointment, ensure that all vaccinations received from your health care provider or other vaccination clinics have been reported to Public Health
 - Parents/students can access immunization records and submit immunization information via ICON (<https://bit.ly/3v9rwPT>) or by calling 519-575-4400 ext. 5001 (Monday to Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm)
 - Your student's Health Card Number is needed to view their immunization record. If you do not have a health card, you can use the Ontario Immunization Identification (OIID) usually found on your child's report card
2. Book your students' vaccination appointment:
 - Use this link to book an appointment online: <https://rmow.vertoengage.com/engage/?key=digital-front-door> OR
 - Call 519-575-4400 to book an appointment over the phone

**** Please note that appointments will be released in blocks every 2 weeks over the next year. Public Health greatly appreciates your patience as we work to get students across the Region caught up****

Vaccine Exemptions (For Meningococcal Vaccine Only):

- You may decide for medical, religious or philosophical reasons not to immunize your child. In this case you will need to provide a written vaccine exemption for Meningococcal vaccine, one of the vaccines required for attendance at school
- For medical exemptions, a legal [Statement of Medical Exemption](#) must be forwarded to Public Health. Please call 519-575-4400 ext. 5001 if you wish to submit a Statement of Medical Exemption
- Public Health is not currently processing non-medical vaccine exemptions (statements of conscience). Additional information will be communicated to parents once the non-medical exemption process has been restarted

****Note:** Public Health does not issue COVID-19 vaccine exemptions. Please contact your family physician, pharmacist, allergist or nurse practitioner if you require written documentation.



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

If you have questions about the School Vaccine Program catch-up process,
please call 519-575-4400 ext. 5001.

Sincerely,

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