

Pediatric Respiratory Illness Surge – December 7, 2022

Dr. Penny Ballem, the head of the British Columbia’s vaccination drives, along with Dr. Bonnie Henry and Minister Dix said this week only one in five children aged six months to four years—who are most vulnerable to respiratory illnesses—have had the flu vaccine this season; they also cited the same percentage for school-aged children, five to 11 years old. The Office of the Chief Medical Health Officer at Island Health is also reporting a sharp increase in Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib) disease on Vancouver Island in the last two months; 7 cases have been confirmed since late 2021 in Victoria, Nanaimo and Parksville, all of which have been in the unhoused population.



Dr. Dee Hoyano and Dr. Michael Benusic of Island Health are sharing that targeted Hib vaccine is being offered to close and at-risk social contacts of cases, but there is no change in the recommendations for Hib vaccine for the general adult population. Universal childhood Hib vaccination remains the primary strategy for disease control in the population. Influenza vaccine is recommended for everybody aged 6 months and older, and is publically funded. About a third of Island Health residents have received an influenza vaccination, but uptake is lower in children. This is particularly concerning for children less than 5 years old, who are at higher risk of hospitalization. Please continue to recommend influenza vaccination to all patients, especially children. Currently in Island Health region, we are seeing extremely high rates of children presenting to the emergency departments, thus underscoring the importance influenza vaccination in managing the seasonal surge.

For Parents: The following page can be provided to parents to help them get their child vaccinated for influenza and access routine childhood vaccinations.

[Where to Get a Flu Vaccine | Island Health](#)

For Primary Care Providers: Physicians and nurse practitioners can order influenza and routine vaccines through their local Health Unit. Information on ordering and the order form are found on the page below.

[Influenza Information for Community Vaccine Providers, Including Indigenous Partners | Island Health](#)

Island Health Region Total COVID-19 Vaccines Administered To Date	% Population Immunized (12+) 2nd Dose To Date	% Population Immunized (5+) 2nd Dose To Date	% Population Immunized (12+) Two Doses & Boosters To Date
2,473,421	94.4%	91.7%	57.6%

NEW RESOURCES

[Island Health Medical Health Officers \(MHO\) Newsletter No. 348 - Haemophilus Influenza Type B Outbreak](#)

- The Office of the Chief MHO is reporting a sharp increase in Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib) disease on Vancouver Island in the last two months; 7 cases have been confirmed since late 2021 in Victoria, Nanaimo and Parksville.

[BCDCD: Updated Clinical Guidance on COVID-19 Vaccines for People with Various Conditions](#)

- 15 new updated clinical guidance documents regarding COVID-19 vaccines for people with various health conditions.

[BCCDC: Influenza Surveillance Reports](#)

- For the 2022/23 respiratory season, surveillance reporting for influenza has been combined with COVID-19 and other respiratory pathogens.

[Physician Master Agreement Ratified by BC Doctors](#)

- Physicians across the province have accepted the proposed Physician Master Agreement (PMA). Voting to ratify the PMA concluded on December 6, 2022 with a total of 5,591 votes cast and 94.15% accepting the agreement.

[GPSC Official Name Change to Family Practice Services Committee](#)

- GPSC has a new name following ratification of the 2022 Physician Master Agreement (PMA) on December 6, 2022. The General Practice Services Committee is now the Family Practice Services Committee, or FPSC.

[Past Issues of the Island Health Primary Care Update](#)

BCCDC Resources:

- [New Today](#): Highlights the latest guidance documents and updates to the website
- [About the vaccines](#)
- [Resources for Health Professionals](#)
- [Reporting adverse events](#)

Doctors of BC:

- [Info for doctors getting or giving the vaccine](#)
- [Updated toolkit for doctors' offices](#)

Frequently Asked Questions:

- [ImmunizeBC FAQ](#)