

HERPES ZOSTER (SHINGLES) IMMUNIZATION POLICY 2022

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1. This policy is necessary for improved accountability and to minimize vaccine wastage of publicly funded vaccine.
- 1.2. The purpose of the Herpes Zoster (HZ) Immunization Policy is to provide provincial direction to immunizers who deliver PEI's publicly funded vaccine to Islanders with the goal of reducing the incidence and impact of herpes zoster infection (shingles) to individuals in the province.
- 1.3. Collaboration, coordination and communication across all phases of the immunization process from vaccine distribution to front line immunization strengthens timely delivery of the vaccine while minimizing vaccine wastage.

2.0 POLICY

- 2.1. The Chief Public Health Office (CPHO) will provide HZ vaccine free of charge to individuals 65 years and older as part of the publicly funded Immunization Program.
- 2.2. Individuals living in Prince Edward Island who present for publicly funded HZ vaccine may be eligible to receive the vaccine free of charge.
 - 2.2.1. Individuals living in PEI with a PEI Health Card will be eligible for the publicly funded supply of HZ vaccine.
 - 2.2.2. Individuals who do not possess a PEI Health Card will not have access to the publicly funded supply of HZ vaccine.

3.0 VACCINE PROVISION

- 3.1. The vaccine will be provided to immunizers who agree to adhere to this Herpes Zoster Immunization Policy.
 - 3.1.1. The vaccine must be maintained according to vaccine [Storage and Handling Guidelines](#) to ensure adequate cold-chain management.

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- 3.1.2. All immunizers must be familiar with the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization \(NACI\) statement](#) as well as relevant vaccine product monographs.
- 3.1.3. Immunizers must have read access to the ALL Immunization Registry in order to check for previous immunizations
- 3.1.4. Vaccine is provided to community pharmacies.
- 3.1.5. Vaccine may be provided to primary care providers or HPEI Public Health Nursing to be administered in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.1.6. Vaccine is provided to First Nations Health Centres for individuals living on reserve.
- 3.1.7. Vaccine is provided to Provincial Correctional Facilities
- 3.1.8. As part of the publicly funded Herpes Zoster Immunization Program, any immunizer must not charge a client for the administration of the vaccine or for the vaccine itself.

4.0 REPORTING

- 4.1. Immunizers must keep records of all publicly funded HZ immunizations administered according to the [Public Health Act Immunization Regulations](#).
- 4.2. Immunizers must check the All Immunization Registry (AIR) for previous immunization prior to administering the HZ vaccine.
- 4.3. Immunizers must report data to the Chief Public Health Office on all HZ vaccine administered, according to the [Public Health Act Immunization Regulations](#) (Section 1.1).
- 4.4. All immunizers must monitor the health and safety of the individuals to whom HZ vaccine is administered; immunizers shall have in place protocols for management of anaphylaxis and vaccine must only be administered in settings where these protocols are in place.

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- 4.5. All unexpected adverse events following administration of HZ vaccine must be reported to the CPHO within 24 hours as soon as observed or reported using the [Adverse Event Following Immunization \(AEFI\) form](#). This requirement is outlined in the [Notifiable Diseases and Conditions and Communicable Diseases Regulations](#) under the [Public Health Act](#).
- 4.6. All expired publicly funded vaccine must be returned to the Provincial Pharmacy.

5.0 APPLICATION

- 5.1. This policy applies to all immunizers who obtain publicly funded vaccine from the CPHO.
- 5.2. Those who administer HZ vaccine outside of the publicly funded vaccine supply are still subject to the recording and reporting requirements under the PEI *Public Health Act* and Immunization Regulations.
- 5.3. Compliance to this policy will be monitored by the Chief Public Health Office. Those found to be non-compliant will have restrictions placed on their ability to receive publicly funded vaccines which may include not receiving further publicly funded vaccine until there is evidence that corrective measures are implemented.

6.0 DEFINITIONS

- 6.1. **Cold Chain Management** - the process used to maintain optimal conditions during the transport, storage, and handling of vaccines, from the point of manufacture until such time as the vaccine is administered to a client.
- 6.2. **Immunizer** - a health professional eligible to administer HZ vaccine under this policy and includes pharmacists, nurses and physicians.
- 6.3. **Publicly funded HZ vaccine** - vaccine that is purchased by the Chief Public Health Office and distributed to immunizers without charge pursuant to this policy.

7.0 BACKGROUND

- 7.1 Vaccination is a safe and effective way to prevent shingles and to minimize complications of disease.

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- 7.2 In the absence of HZ vaccination, nearly one in three Canadians developed shingles during their lifetime. Up to 40% of persons with acute Herpes Zoster disease or shingles report at least one complication from the illness.
- 7.3 The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommends that Recombinant Zoster Vaccine should be offered to populations ≥ 50 years of age without contraindications.
- 7.4 The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommends that Recombinant Zoster Vaccine (RZV) should be offered to populations ≥ 50 years of age without contraindications who have previously been vaccinated with Live Zoster Vaccine (LZV).
- 7.5 NACI indicates that offering to people ≥ 65 years of age provides the most benefit and is the more cost effective since to a higher burden of illness occurs with increasing age (increased risk of hospitalization and PHN per HZ case is highest ≥ 65 years of age) and the likelihood that the vaccine will be effective during the years when burden of illness is high.
- 7.6 Publicly funded HZ vaccine available in PEI: inactive Shingrix® Recombinant Zoster Vaccine (RZV) will be provided to those 65 years and older.
- 7.7 The goal of the RZ immunization program is to prevent serious illness caused by herpes zoster virus (shingles) and its complications.
- 7.8 The Chief Public Health Office participates in a pan-Canadian contract to purchase HZ vaccine and provides this free of charge to immunizers to administer to the public.
- 7.9 The HZ vaccine is received by pharmacy distributors for pharmacy and distributed according to orders placed by immunizers.

8.0 KEY SEARCH WORDS

- 8.1 Herpes Zoster Immunization Policy; Immunization Regulations; Notifiable Diseases and Conditions and Communicable Disease Regulations.

9.0 CROSS REFERENCE

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- 9.1. PEI Public Health Act; Notifiable Diseases and Conditions and Communicable Disease Regulations; Immunization Regulations.
- 9.2. National Advisory Committee on Immunization (2018). Updated Recommendations on the Use of Herpes Zoster Vaccines
<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/health/publications/healthy-living/updated-recommendations-use-herpes-zoster-vaccines.html>