

Influenza Immunization Program Update and FAQs 2024-2025

The official start date of the Ministry of Health's 2024-2025 Seasonal Influenza Immunization Program (SIIP) is **October 15, 2024**.

Pending vaccine availability, pharmacies may begin submitting claims to the Drug Plan and Extended Benefits Branch (DPEBB) for FLUZONE® HIGH-DOSE PFS and AFLURIA® TETRA QUADRIVALENT MDV on October 7, 2024, as part of the soft-start of the SIIP.

The daily influenza vaccine ordering limits are:

AFLURIA® TETRA QUADRIVALENT MDV: MAXIMUM ORDER QTY OF 7 UNITS (70 doses)

FLUZONE® HIGH-DOSE PFS: MAXIMUM ORDER QTY OF 10 UNITS (50 doses)

New for 2024 -2025

New for the 2024-2025 Influenza Immunization Program (IIP), the DPEBB will be moving to a single billing procedure that will mirror the process used in the COVID-19 Immunization Program, see Appendix 1.

The Influenza Immunization Program policy can be found at

<https://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/InfluenzaImmunizationProgram>.

Who To Contact

**REGISTRATION OF A PHARMACY FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM;
INFLUENZA VACCINE SUPPLY; and**

DAILY ORDER LIMITS (and requests exceeding daily limits for an influenza immunization clinic):

- Contact the DPEBB at dpebimmunizations@health.gov.sk.ca.

BILLING QUESTIONS OR ISSUES:

- Contact the DPEBB at 306-787-3317 (Regina) or 1-800-667-7581.

ORDERING AND SHIPPING OF PUBLICLY FUNDED INFLUENZA VACCINE:

Contact the appropriate wholesaler order desk:

- McKesson Canada Order Desk: 1-800-667-9299.
- Kohl & Frisch Ltd. Order Desk: 1-800-821-8777.
- Shoppers Drug Mart/Loblaw Pharmacies should order publicly funded influenza vaccine using their pharmacy order management system.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **What are the dates for the Ministry 2024-2025 Seasonal Influenza Immunization Program (SIIP)?**
 - The Ministry's 2024-2025 SIIP is scheduled to officially begin on October 15, 2024 and ends on March 31, 2025.
 - Children under the age of nine receiving their first influenza immunization may receive their second dose and pharmacies may bill for services until April 30, 2025.
 - **As part of the soft-launch and pending no shipping delays**, authorized immunizers are permitted to begin administration of the publicly funded Fluzone® High-Dose and Alfuria® on October 7, 2024.
2. **Do pharmacists need to obtain consent from individuals to administer an influenza vaccine?**
 - Yes, as all immunizations in the Province of Saskatchewan are voluntary, pharmacists are required to obtain informed written or verbal consent before immunization with a publicly funded or privately purchased vaccine.
 - Pharmacists must follow the requirements for obtaining and documenting consent according to the *Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Pharmacists in the Administration of Drugs by Injection and Other Routes, August 2015* of the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals (SCPP) at <https://saskpharm.ca/site/profprac/adminofdrugs?nav=sidebar>.
 - All documentation for verbal consent **MUST** clearly indicate that the consent was obtained verbally. The Ministry of Health Influenza Vaccine Fact Sheet 2024-25 is to be made available for each individual to obtain informed consent.
3. **Where can pharmacists get copies of the client-applicable Influenza Vaccine Fact Sheet?**
 - The Ministry of Health 2024-2025 Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Fact Sheet is available for downloading free of charge from the Ministry's publication centre at <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/accessing-health-care-services/immunization-services/immunization-forms-and-fact-sheets>.
 - It will also be available on the online Formulary at <http://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/InfluenzaImmunizationProgram>.
4. **Where can pharmacists get the Ministry wallet cards to provide to individuals as proof of immunization?**
 - Pharmacies can download a copy or order wallet cards free of charge from the Ministry's publication centre at <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/#/products/82513>
 - Proof of vaccine can also be found on the patient's MySaskHealthRecord.
5. **Can authorized immunizers administer the vaccine to the whole family, if a family has children younger than five years of age?**
 - The SIIP permits **authorized pharmacy immunizers** to administer the influenza vaccine to residents of Saskatchewan who are **five years of age and older**.
 - A child younger than five years old **must be referred** to local Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) Public Health for administration of the influenza vaccine.
 - Children younger than nine years of age may require one or two doses of influenza vaccine given no less than four weeks apart depending on their previous influenza immunization history.
6. **Can authorized immunizers administer the publicly funded influenza vaccine in locations other than pharmacies?**
 - Authorized immunizers may administer publicly funded influenza vaccine within the physical space of licensed pharmacy or outside of the pharmacy, as defined in *Appendix I: Definition of Alternate Location, Congregate Living Setting, Licensed Personal Care Home (PCH) and Home Visit for Publicly Funded Vaccine* in the Influenza Immunization Program (IIP) policy document.

Note: Pharmacies are **not authorized** to administer publicly funded vaccine at businesses and other non-public access locations. Pharmacies **are authorized** to support socially vulnerable populations (e.g., homeless shelters, foodbanks).

Pharmacies are reminded that all off-site delivery of influenza vaccine should be coordinated with local public health offices to prevent possible duplication of services.

7. Do I need to register an “Alternate Location” with the DPEBB for individuals to received publicly funded influenza vaccine?

- Although pharmacies aren’t required to register alternate location clinics with the DPEBB, they should make every effort to ensure a clinic date has not already been established for residents in these settings or for home visits.

Note: Pharmacies are **not authorized** to administer publicly funded vaccine at businesses and other non-public access locations. Pharmacies **are authorized** to support socially vulnerable populations (e.g., homeless shelters, foodbanks).

8. What are the reporting requirements if an individual experiences an adverse event following immunization (AEFI)?

- Complete an AEFI form and if it is related to a publicly funded vaccine, submit it **immediately** to your local SHA Public Health as set out in the SIIP at <http://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/InfluenzaImmunizationProgram>.
- If the AEFI is related to a privately purchased vaccine, the form must be completed and sent directly to Health Canada.
- medSask created a supportive document to assist pharmacists filling out an AEFI, which can be found at <https://medsask.usask.ca/sites/medsask/files/2023-02/aefi-quick-sheet.pdf>.

9. What are the reporting requirements if there is a cold chain break?

- **Report all cold chain breaks for publicly funded vaccines immediately upon discovery** to the Population Health Branch, Saskatchewan Ministry of Health, as set out in the SIIP.
- The *Cold Chain Break Report Form* is included as **Appendix 3** of the SIIP and is available at the following links:
 - <http://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/InfluenzaImmunizationProgram>; and
 - <http://www.ehealthsask.ca/services/manuals/Documents/sim-chapter9.pdf>.
- Information to assist pharmacists in completing the form is included as **Appendix 4** in the SIIP and is available at the following link:
 - <http://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/InfluenzaImmunizationProgram>.

10. What are the reporting requirements for publicly funded vaccine wastage?

- All wasted influenza vaccine doses, including unused doses at the end of the season, must be **reported immediately** to the Population Health Branch, Saskatchewan Ministry of Health, as set out in the SIIP.
- The *Product Wastage Report* form is included as **Appendix 5** of the SIIP and is available at the following links:
 - <http://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/InfluenzaImmunizationProgram>; and
 - <http://www.ehealthsask.ca/services/manuals/Documents/sim-chapter9.pdf>.

11. What should be done if there is a problem with an influenza vaccine vial or pre-filled syringe?

- Problems with vaccine vials or pre-filled syringes must be reported to the Ministry of Health immediately using the *Vaccine Supply Problem Report* form in **Appendix 6** of the SIIP and is available at the following links:
 - <http://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/InfluenzaImmunizationProgram>; and
 - <http://www.ehealthsask.ca/services/manuals/Documents/sim-chapter9.pdf>.

12. Can a pharmacy buy its own vaccine and charge the individual if they are from out-of-province?

- A pharmacy is not permitted to use publicly funded influenza vaccine to immunize out-of-province individuals. However, out-of-province individuals can receive the publicly funded vaccine free of charge from the local SHA Public Health.
- A pharmacy may purchase and charge an out-of-province individual for a non-publicly funded influenza vaccine if the individual so chooses, but first must be informed of any SHA public health no-charge options.
- Pharmacies cannot submit a claim for an IIF to the DPEBB for non-publicly funded influenza vaccine.

13. Can pharmacies provide incentives or rewards under customer loyalty programs when providing the publicly funded influenza immunization?

- **No incentives shall be provided** by the Proprietor, or an agent on behalf of the Proprietor, to any other person in relation to the provision of publicly funded influenza immunization. *“Incentives” means any money, gifts, donations to a charity, rebates, refunds, customer loyalty programs, points, coupons, discounts, goods and/or rewards which can be redeemed for a gift or other benefit.*

14. Can our pharmacy advertise the “soft start” of the Influenza Immunization Program to patrons?

- It is not permitted to publicize the soft start directly or indirectly, by not including the official start date. Any advertising of publicly funded influenza vaccine must be associated with the official start date of the Program or beyond.

15. Children between the ages of five and eight years will require a second dose of influenza vaccine (minimum of four weeks [28 days] after their first dose) if they have not received the influenza vaccine before. How does a pharmacy submit a claim for capture of the vaccine product and a claim for payment of the IIF if that child turns nine years old before they receive the second required dose?

- The child would not be eligible to receive the second dose if they have turned nine years old.

16. How does a pharmacy submit a claim for capture for the vaccine product if a patient has inadvertently received more than one dose (or more than two doses in children five to eight years of age) of publicly funded influenza vaccine in a season?

- If a patient has inadvertently received an additional dose that they were not eligible to receive, the pharmacist should submit the immunization event for capture using usual processes. The pharmacy would not be eligible to receive the IIF.

17. How does a pharmacy order the publicly funded influenza vaccine for licensed personal care home (PCH) residents?

- Pharmacies may order funded influenza vaccine for PCH residents, as per the usual ordering process from their wholesaler.
- Pharmacies are not required to register Personal Care Home (PCH) residents into the Vaccine Risk Factor Portal. However, when requested, pharmacies are to provide the DPEBB with a list of residents that received publicly funded influenza vaccine within two business days.

18. Do I need to contact public health about the PCHs our pharmacy will provide vaccination services to?

- Pharmacies must contact their local public health office if they did not indicate the PCHs they were servicing on the initial registration survey. Otherwise, the PCHs and corresponding pharmacies providing vaccination services noted in the registration survey will be communicated to public health by the DPEBB.

19. Can I co-administer influenza vaccine with COVID-19 vaccine?

- Influenza vaccine may be administered during the same appointment as other vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccine.

20. I am having a clinic and need more than the maximum daily allocation. How can I get more vaccine?

- You may order the maximum allocations every day in advance to reach your expected demand for a clinic. If you require more than the maximum allocations on short notice, please email dpebimmunizations@health.gov.sk.ca for support.

21. Who is eligible to receive Fluzone® High-Dose vaccine?

- All residents (i.e., in the community, congregate living and personal care homes) age 65 and older with a valid Saskatchewan Health Services Card are eligible to receive the publicly funded Fluzone® High-Dose vaccine.

22. A patient of ours who is age 65, does NOT want Fluzone High-Dose®. Is it okay to administer Afluria® (or other publicly funded regular dose influenza vaccine)?

- Yes, Afluria® is indicated for individuals age 5 and older, while FluLaval® and regular Fluzone® are indicated for individuals' age 6 months and older.

23. COVID-19 Immunization Program

- Information regarding the availability of COVID-19 vaccine will be provided to pharmacies as soon it is available.

Appendix I: Influenza Immunization Billing Procedure

1. Provide the vaccination and submit the record of the influenza vaccine product using the product DIN under the prescriber who has completed Advanced Method Certification for pharmacists.
 2. The record of the influenza vaccine product administered, which is part of the Influenza Immunization Fee (IIF) claim, must be **submitted for adjudication** to DPEBB as a **single transaction** on the **same day** as the influenza vaccine administration.
- The DPEBB pays 100% of the IIF to the pharmacy
 - Ensure the following fields are completed as follows:
 - **PATIENT IDENTIFIER** = nine-digit Health Services Number (HSN)
 - **DISPENSING DATE** = date of the vaccination (i.e., October 7, 2024)
 - **RX NUMBER** = enter the sequential RX#
 - **HEALTH PROVIDER ORGANIZATION ID** = SKCP
 - **HEALTH PROVIDER ID** = Pharmacist ID number (e.g., D1234)
 - **PHARMACIST ORGANIZATION ID** = SK
 - **PHARMACIST ID** = Pharmacist ID number (e.g., D1234)
 - **DIN** = enter the DIN of influenza vaccine product*
 - **COMPOUNDING FEE (CF)** = \$0.00
 - **COMPOUND NAME** = blank
 - **QUANTITY (QTY)** = 1
 - **DAYS SUPPLY** = 1
 - **ACQUISITION COST (AC)** = \$14.00
 - **DISPENSING FEE (DF)** = \$0.00
 - **MARKUP** = 00 / 00 / 00
 - **TOTAL RX COST** = \$14.00
 - **PATIENT PAID** = \$0.00
 - **ADJUDICATION FLAG** = Y

- *Publicly Funded influenza vaccine products for 2024-2025
 - AFLURIA® TETRA **DIN 02473313**
 - FLUZONE® HIGH-DOSE QUADRIVALENT **DIN 02500523**
- Please note: the DPEBB will not accept paper claims for the IIF.
- If you are unable to submit either the record of the influenza vaccine administered or the IIF electronically through your Practice Management System, please use the secure DPEBB web page by logging on to <https://www.drugplan.health.gov.sk.ca>