

January 23, 2019

Dear Health Care Provider:

This letter is to provide an update on influenza vaccine supply in relation to the MOHLTC's Universal Influenza Immunization Program (UIIP) for the 2018/2019 influenza season. The Northwestern Health Unit distributes influenza vaccine in accordance with direction from the MOHLTC, supplied from Ontario Government Pharmaceutical and Medical Supply Service (OGPMSS) in Toronto.

Inventory Strategies for Effective Use of QIV

Weekly ordering limits have been put in place by the MOHLTC over the last several weeks, impacting pharmacies' supply from their distributors as well as amounts health units are allowed to distribute to health care providers. NWHU is restricted to providing limits of 10 to 20 doses per week, which will continue for the remainder of the flu season to maximize the use of the vaccines that are currently in the community.

Public Access to Influenza Vaccines for the Remainder of the Flu Season

As there are a large number of QIV doses (estimated at between 300,000 and 350,000 doses) in the fridges of pharmacies and primary care provider offices across the province, local public health units may be connecting with providers and directing clients to locations where vaccine stock is available.

Additional Information from the MOHLTC:

Influenza Activity in Ontario and Canada

At the national level, for the week of January 6 to 12, the number of influenza cases continued to decline sharply from the previous week confirming that the influenza season reached peak levels in the last week of December. In Ontario, cases also decreased for the week of January 6 to 12. Influenza A is the most common flu strain circulating in the province and Canada, with the majority of cases being A(H1N1)pdm09.

Provincial Vaccine Supply Update

- The total number of influenza vaccine doses purchased for the province was increased to 4.57 million doses (up from 4.4M) in order to meet the early and increased demand.
- If demand continues at the same rate, OGPMS's stock of QIV is expected to be depleted by the end of this week, January 20 to 26, 2019.
- Quadrivalent live attenuated influenza vaccine (Q-LAIV; nasal spray vaccine) has been out of stock at OGPMS since late November.
- High-dose TIV remains available for order from OGPMS by Toronto providers and public health units.

I wish to thank you for the important role that you play as a health care provider in delivering the province's UIIP and protecting Ontarians against the flu.

If you or your patients have questions regarding local vaccine supply, please contact us at 1-800-830-5978.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kit Young-Hoon
Medical Officer of Health
Northwestern Health Unit