

# COVID-19 at Holland Bloorview - Links and FAQ

## Staff vaccination at Holland Bloorview

This document contains answers to the most common questions regarding staff COVID-19 vaccination at Holland Bloorview. If you have additional questions, please speak to your manager or email [covid19@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:covid19@hollandbloorview.ca).

### **How long is the vaccination appointment? What happens after? (NEW)**

You should build in one hour for the appointment. This includes screening, getting the shot and monitoring for any immediate side effects. More information about what to expect after getting your shot can be found on this [Ontario Ministry of Health covid 19 vaccine after care sheet](#).

### **I'm hesitant to get the vaccine because I fear taking it away from someone who needs it more. Should I get vaccinated now? (NEW)**

We understand the potential moral and ethical dilemma people may feel about getting the vaccine. Please know that any vaccine availability offered to Holland Bloorview staff is being done in accordance with the province's multi-phased vaccine distribution plan which is grounded in an ethical framework. In addition, Holland Bloorview's vaccine roll-out plan has been reviewed from an ethical perspective and approved by the senior management team. Holland Bloorview is an essential service and we are being vaccinated to protect the vulnerable population we serve. We strongly encourage you to get the vaccine knowing that the choice is yours to make.

### **How are you determining who receives the vaccine?**

Prior to hearing the excellent news about vaccine availability, our team (including director of pharmacy Nathan Ho and clinical bioethicist Dolly Menna-Dack) had been working on a prioritized selection process, consistent with the Province of Ontario's ethical framework, to support our vaccine rollout strategy. This work continues both internally and at a system level to ensure equitable access to the vaccine.

Complementing this work, we are grateful to the following additional team members that comprise our vaccine rollout working group:

- Executive sponsors: Irene Andress, Diane Savage, Tracey Millar.
- Operational leadership: Lindsey Crawford, Heidi Schwellnus, Claire Whyte, Rohan Mahabir, Michelle Gouveia, Angie Sweeney, and members off the occupational health and wellness team.

Per Ministry of Health guidelines, we are prioritizing direct care and client-facing providers in this first phase of vaccination. Direct care providers are defined as being within six feet/two meters of clients for a duration of 15 minutes or more without a physical barrier. This includes students, researchers and environmental services staff as applicable. If you are a direct care provider and have not yet been contacted with an opportunity to receive the vaccination and would like to, please contact Kathleen Hollamby, x3577.

We're also considering factors including contact with vulnerable clients and ability to attend available vaccination appointment dates and times. Managers are supporting this process from a coverage point

of view. Please note a second dose of vaccine is required 21 days from the original shot. We are not considering age as a factor for prioritization.

Serious side effects to the vaccine are extremely rare. Teams should also be mindful of possible mild or moderate side effects (body chills, feeling tired or feverish) that require staff to stay home and thus impact team coverage.

**I have an underlying medical diagnosis that increases my susceptibility to COVID-19, will I be moved up the priority list?**

The prioritization list is currently based on job role/profession. The ethical framework we are employing does not differentiate among priority staff based on personal health characteristics.

**What vaccine is Michael Garron hospital using to vaccinate Holland Bloorview staff?**

Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 mRNA vaccine. [Click for additional details](#). mRNA vaccines contain the genetic “recipe” to make a protein that will trigger an immune response. The protein is the spike protein found on the surface of the virus that causes COVID-19. In response, our body makes antibodies to help fight off infection.

**Will students, researchers, contract and Sodexo employees in food and environmental services have access to the COVID-19 vaccine through Holland Bloorview?**

Yes, these groups are included in our vaccination planning. Those providing direct client care are being prioritized.

**What about non-clinical staff including administration, building services, volunteer services and the Foundation? Will we get vaccinated?**

We are continuing to work on the rollout strategy and all non-clinical staff are included in our planning. More details will be shared as they become available.

**What about teachers in the Bloorview School and daycare staff in Kindercircle?**

We are continuing to work on the roll out strategy and these groups are included in our planning. More details will be shared as they become available.

**What about clients and their designated caregivers?**

We are waiting for Ontario Health to provide us with direction about vaccinating clients and their designated caregivers. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is currently approved for those 16 years and older and the Moderna vaccine has been approved for those who are 18 years and older.

**What if I've received the vaccine at another place of employment?**

Please let occupational health know. We need to ensure we have an up-to-date list of who still needs to receive a vaccine and who does not. All staff who have been vaccinated should forward the email that they received after their vaccination that shows the date and time they were vaccinated to [occupationalhealth@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:occupationalhealth@hollandbloorview.ca).

**How many Holland Bloorview team members have received their first vaccination dose?** As of January 4, 2021, 59 staff members have received their vaccination. We will soon be posting updated information

at the bottom of our email bulletins and on our website.

**Will there be employment implications if I choose not to get vaccinated?**

At this time, it is your choice to receive the vaccine. We are pleased that Holland Bloorview has access to the vaccine and encourage staff to make the best decision for them.

**If I feel sick as a result of getting the vaccine, will I be paid for time off?**

Serious side effects are extremely rare, but if you do get sick, you will be compensated according to your current sick pay plan. Please ask your manager or contact the people and culture team for any clarification about sick leave policy. If you are sick, please inform your manager and occupational health.

**I can only go during a work shift. Will I be paid during this time?**

If possible, we are asking staff to go off-shift. If this is not possible and it has been cleared with your manager, you can use paid working time during your shift to be vaccinated. We encourage staff to select a vaccination date and time that has a minimal impact on client care.

**Where am I on the list? When will I receive my vaccination?**

We are unable to provide this level of information. As we've seen, notification of available vaccines can arrive with little notice. We're doing our best to provide a smooth process and ask for patience and understanding while you wait.

**I was reading in the news that the vaccine is first going to long-term care staff, residents and essential caregivers. Since I don't fall into one of those categories shouldn't I wait and let someone who is higher priority get the vaccine?**

The Government of Ontario has developed a high-level framework for vaccine distribution. Individual hub hospitals (such as Michael Garron Hospital) are having to make decisions about how to distribute vaccine doses to make sure none are wasted. Rest assured, if you have been offered the vaccine it is because you are entitled to it and you are not keeping it away from anyone who needs it more.

**Will there be staff vaccination clinics at Holland Bloorview?**

Michael Garron Hospital has been dedicated as the hub hospital to provide vaccination to Holland Bloorview staff by Ontario Health. We will advise you if that changes.

**Will all Holland Bloorview staff be vaccinated once direct client care and client facing teams have received vaccinations?**

Yes, we do expect that all Holland Bloorview will be vaccinated. Our ultimate goal is to protect our clients and families by creating a safe ecosystem. During the first phase of our vaccine rollout, we are concentrating on those who are direct-care providers. In line with our vaccination ethical framework, we will reach out to more staff as we move beyond the first phase. We do not have a timeline to share at this time. Please look to future COVID-19 bulletins for more updates.

**What if I have an adverse reaction to the vaccine?**

Adverse reactions are rare, but they can happen. First notify Occ Health then fill out Public Health Ontario's form at [this link](#) and send it to their local public health unit (list [here](#)).

**Does Holland Bloorview have a COVID-19 vaccination goal for staff?**

We do. We are aiming for 100 per cent of our staff to be vaccinated. Along with continued PPE use, and distancing and sanitation measures, this is the best way to keep clients, families and ourselves safe.

**Once a staff member receives their full dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, will they need to continue wearing a mask while onsite?**

Yes, masks will still be required. Though the Pfizer vaccine is 95 per cent effective after receiving both doses, we have not reached herd immunity so the risk of contracting COVID-19 still exists. We will continue to observe public health's masking, sanitizing and distancing guidelines until advised that it is safe to do otherwise.

**Is the COVID-19 vaccine mandatory?**

No. Like the flu shot, the COVID vaccine is strongly encouraged but not mandatory. We trust that you are the best person to decide what is right for you.

**What if I want to wait and see and maybe get the vaccine later?**

You can definitely decide to decline the offer right now and change your mind later. Please note that we are not able to predict the timing/availability of the vaccine in the weeks and months ahead.

**Do we have confirmation that staff who have received the first dose of vaccine at Michael Garron Hospital will receive their second dose?**

Based on current supplies and expected deliveries from Ministry of Health, Michael Garron Hospital is committed to delivering a second dose to those who have received their first. Those who've had their first dose have been pre-booked for their second dose three weeks following.

**Will Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital be providing vaccinations to clients and family caregivers?**

At this moment, Holland Bloorview has not been designated as a vaccination centre, but this may change in the future. Please note that there is no approved vaccine for anyone under the age of 16. Children's immune systems are very different from adults', and their immune responses can be different at different ages. So the research that's been done on the COVID-19 vaccines for adults needs to be repeated in children of younger ages. This work is underway.