

# Introduction: Immunization Program Manual for Immunization Providers in Manitoba

## Public Health Branch

Date Approved: August 2013  
Applicable to: All Immunization Providers

### Purpose of the Manual:

- To provide immunization providers in Manitoba with a resource that supports the effective and safe delivery of publicly-funded vaccines to Manitobans.

### Program Overview:

Immunization has saved more lives in Canada in the last 50 years than any other medical intervention. The prevention of disease through the administration of vaccines improves health status while reducing or preventing the costs associated with medical interventions for communicable diseases. Cost savings are attributed to a reduction in the number of physician visits, hospitalizations and surgical procedures as well as to prevention of productivity loss due to absence(s) from school or work.

In Canada, provinces and territories are responsible for the development of publicly-funded immunization programs, including the purchase of vaccines. Each provincial or territorial Ministry of Health uses national recommendations to develop its program and schedules for infants, children and adults. While the provinces and territories decide which vaccines to purchase, the majority of the vaccines used in publicly-funded immunization programs in Canada are purchased through a bulk purchasing program coordinated by Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC).

The Biologics and Genetic Therapeutic Directorate (BGTD), Health Canada, is charged with the licensure of new vaccines in Canada. As new vaccines are Health Canada-approved, Manitoba Health undertakes a systematic review of: (1) provincial epidemiology; (2) vaccine safety; (3) cost effectiveness; and, (4) the impact of the vaccine on disease in Manitoba. Manitoba Health also gathers best-practice, evidence-informed information from: (1) current research; (2) other provinces and territories; (3) provincial experts as constituted in the Provincial Vaccine Advisory

Committee (PVAC); and, (4) public health experts from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI).

*NACI is an independent committee of recognized experts that provides expert advice on vaccines to the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). After Health Canada authorizes a vaccine for sale in Canada, NACI evaluates all available scientific information about that vaccine and then makes recommendations about its optimal use.*

For a complete list of publicly-funded vaccines in Manitoba, please see *Vaccines Offered Free-of-Charge: Eligibility Criteria for Publicly-Funded Vaccines* available online at: [www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/vaccineeligibility.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/vaccineeligibility.html).

Since 2003, federal, provincial and territorial public health representatives and other relevant stakeholders have collaborated to support a national approach to addressing immunization issues in Canada. To continue working towards a national strategy, PHAC has facilitated ongoing discussions with the provinces, territories and key stakeholders. Presently, the provinces and territories continue to be responsible for planning, funding and delivering immunization programs to their respective populations while contributing to the shared activities that support a National Immunization Strategy.

### Roles and Responsibilities:

The authority for Manitoba's Publicly-Funded Immunization Program is provided by the *Public Health Act*. Under this *Act*, Manitoba Health establishes overall strategic direction through policies, standards and guidelines for immunization programs in Manitoba. The regional health authorities (RHAs), including First Nations Inuit Health (FNIH), are responsible for direct service delivery including all aspects of effective vaccine delivery and administration. (For a list of RHAs and contact information, visit [www.gov.mb.ca/health/rha/contact.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/rha/contact.html)).

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In Manitoba, an immunization provider is a health care professional who is registered or licensed to provide health care under an Act of the Legislature and who is authorized under that Act to administer vaccines. This includes registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, registered psychiatric nurses, nurse practitioners and physicians.

### **References:**

Manitoba Health's *Eligibility for Publicly-Funded Vaccines Policy*

Manitoba *Public Health Act*

### **Other Sources:**

*The Canadian Immunization Guide*