



Flu Immunization

The Health Authorities in BC have implemented a policy for influenza immunization of all health care workers who come into contact with patients at publicly-funded health care facilities in the community, including long-term-care facilities. This includes all health-care workers including health authority staff, physicians and residents, volunteers, students and contractors and vendors who come into contact with patients. These individuals are now required to receive an influenza vaccine no later than the first week of December or to wear a surgical/procedure mask during influenza season when in a patient care area (influenza season typically extends from the end of November until the end of March but may vary with seasonal epidemiology.)

Dental hygienists who provide care for patients in community settings, public health settings or residential care facilities are required to comply with this new policy. Students and staff of educational facilities are also encouraged to be immunized against the influenza virus given their interaction with patients in community and long-term care rotations. Program directors should consult with the respective Deans of their institutions regarding implementation strategies.

Dental hygienists who work in private general practice are encouraged to receive the influenza vaccine to assist in the prevention of transmission of the disease however are not required to follow the health authority policy.

The College wishes to emphasize the importance of meticulous infection control and prevention including diligent hand hygiene, proper use of masks and gloves and refraining from attending work when ill. For more information on the Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines recently published by the CDHBC and CDSBC please access the document on Practice Resources page.