

Changes to immunization requirements for school attendance: information for health care providers

Ontario's *Immunization of School Pupils Act* requires that children and adolescents attending primary or secondary school be immunized against designated diseases, unless they have a valid exemption. All immunization requirements for school attendance align with Ontario's publicly funded immunization schedule, available at: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/immunization>.

What's New?

- Beginning in the 2014/15 school year, children and adolescents will require proof of immunization against meningococcal disease, pertussis (whooping cough), and – for children born in 2010 or later – varicella (chickenpox) to attend school. This is in addition to the existing requirements for proof of immunization against tetanus, diphtheria, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella.
- The number of required doses of tetanus, diphtheria, polio, and mumps vaccines has been updated to align with current clinical guidelines.

What You Need to Know

- Children and adolescents who have received all recommended vaccines as per Ontario's publicly funded immunization schedule will not require any further immunizations.
- You may be contacted by parents to verify that their children meet the immunization requirements for school attendance, or to catch up on required immunizations they may have missed.
- Adolescents requiring immunization with the meningococcal ACYW-135 vaccine will be notified by their public health unit in the 2014/15 school year with information about how to get immunized. If you require access to this vaccine through the existing special release mechanism, please contact your public health unit for more information.
- You may also be contacted by parents requesting records of previous immunizations. Please note that the provision of an immunization record is included as part of the insured service for immunization and cannot be billed to a client.
- If your client requires an immunization exemption for medical reasons, you will be required to provide the parent with a statement of medical exemption, available from the government online forms repository at: <http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca>.
- Please remind parents to provide their child's immunization records to their public health unit.

For More Information

Further information for health care providers is available at:

- Website for Health Care Professionals: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/immunization>.
- Your public health unit: <http://www.phdapps.health.gov.on.ca/PHULocator>.

Public information is available at: <http://www.ontario.ca/vaccines>.