

## Frequently Asked Questions for Pharmacists Administration of the Publicly Funded Influenza Vaccine and Claims Submission using the Health Network System

Pharmacists participating in Ontario's Universal Influenza Immunization Program receiving publicly funded influenza vaccine (i.e., injectable and nasal spray formats) must be familiar with the [Vaccine Storage and Handling Guidelines](#).

For more information on:

- the Universal Influenza Immunization Program, please review the [ministry's website](#) or contact UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca
- Health Network System claims issues, pharmacy staff may contact the ministry Help Desk
- resources including patient consent forms, patient questionnaires and permanent personal immunization records, pharmacists should contact the [Ontario Pharmacists Association](#)
- injection training and scope of practice, pharmacists should contact the [Ontario College of Pharmacists](#)

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## Overview

### 1. What is the pharmacist's role in the administration of the publicly funded influenza vaccine to Ontarians?

Pharmacists may deliver the publicly funded influenza vaccine to eligible individuals five years of age and older who live, work or go to school in Ontario in Universal Influenza Immunization Program approved pharmacies in strict accordance with an approved Universal Influenza Immunization Program [User Agreement and Health Network System Subscription Agreement](#) with the government.

### 2. What are the publicly funded influenza vaccines that are available to pharmacies?

The names and drug identification numbers of the publicly funded influenza vaccines are listed on the [Notice from the Executive Officer](#) that is published in October at the start of each influenza season. These are the vaccines that Universal Influenza Immunization Program approved pharmacies are able to order, at no cost and administer to eligible Ontarians for that specific season also at no cost to patients.

For the 2018/19 influenza season, pharmacists may order quadrivalent vaccines. The Fluzone® High-Dose trivalent vaccine is not available for pharmacies to order. It will be available for residents of long-term care homes and hospital in-patients of the appropriate age as well as through primary care providers. Pharmacists should refer patients aged 65 years and older who request Fluzone® High-Dose trivalent vaccine to their primary care provider. Please note that referring a patient to the physician for this purpose is not billable under the Pharmaceutical Opinion Program.

### 3. Which influenza vaccine should an individual age 65 years and older receive?

There is currently no data on how high-dose trivalent compares to quadrivalent products. Given the options available for vaccination for those age 65 years and older, it is important to discuss the specifics of each available vaccine to assist the individual in their decision making. Please refer to the Health Care Provider Q&A Fact Sheets for influenza vaccine information according to patient age groups posted on the [ministry website](#).

### 4. How will the public know which pharmacies in Ontario are providing publicly funded influenza vaccines?

Pharmacies continue to self-promote that they provide the influenza vaccine – flu shot through radio, television and on-line advertisements as well as in-store signage.

The ministry’s flu clinic locator website will not be available this season; however, members of the public should contact their local pharmacy to inquire about influenza vaccine availability. The Ontario College of Pharmacists’ registry also lists the injection-trained pharmacists.

**5. How do government approved pharmacies obtain the publicly funded vaccines?**

Universal Influenza Immunization Program approved pharmacies:

- located outside of Toronto’s postal code ‘M’ will order approved vaccines (at no cost) via their primary pharmaceutical wholesaler.
- located within Toronto’s postal code ‘M’ will order vaccines through the Ontario Government Pharmaceutical and Medical Supply Service (OGPMSS).

**Table 1: Vaccine ordering by approved pharmacies**

Approved pharmacy location	Where to order publicly funded vaccine
within Toronto (within the M postal code)	Ontario Government Pharmaceutical and Medical Supply Service (OGPMSS) by faxing the <a href="#">Influenza Vaccine Order Form for the UIIP</a> to 416-327-0818
outside Toronto (not within the M postal code)	Wholesale distributors <sup>1</sup> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kohl &amp; Frisch Limited</li> <li>• McKesson Canada</li> <li>• McMahon Distributeur Pharmaceutique Inc.</li> <li>• Shoppers Drug Mart</li> </ul>

**6. Are pharmacists authorized to administer non-publicly funded influenza vaccines?**

To receive payment from the ministry, pharmacists can only administer publicly funded influenza vaccines according to the Universal Influenza Immunization Program agreement.

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<sup>1</sup> The ministry provides information to pharmacies in regards to which distributor the pharmacy will be ordering vaccine from. In addition, pharmacies outside of Toronto will receive more specific details directly from their wholesaler including information of daily order limits and protocols for returns of wasted vaccine.

For questions on whether a pharmacist has the authority beyond the Universal Influenza Immunization Program parameters, please contact the [Ontario College of Pharmacists](#).

## Eligibility

### **7. Are all individuals eligible for the publicly funded influenza immunization administered by the pharmacist?**

No. Pharmacists can only administer the publicly funded influenza immunization by injection to individuals five years of age and older who live, work or study in Ontario. Publicly funded FluMist® nasal spray may only be administered to individuals 5 to 17 years of age.

### **8. Are patients required to provide consent before pharmacists administer the flu immunization?**

Yes. Completion of a consent form is required by the patient or the patient's authorized representative or substitute decision maker prior to administration of the influenza immunization.

To obtain a consent form, pharmacists may contact the [Ontario Pharmacists Association](#)

### **9. Can a person who does not have an Ontario health card number still receive the publicly funded influenza vaccine at a pharmacy?**

Yes. A pharmacist can administer the publicly funded influenza vaccine to someone without an Ontario health card number provided they are at least 5 years old and have valid documentation that they live, work or study in Ontario. However, the pharmacist will not be paid any administration fee for these doses.

Alternatively, pharmacists may direct patients without a health card number to the local public health unit for the influenza vaccine.

If the pharmacist does administer the vaccine to a patient without an Ontario health card number, the pharmacist must complete the [required form](#), and submit it to the ministry for tracking purposes. For more information, please contact [UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca](mailto:UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca).

**10. Can a pharmacist still submit a claim for payment for the administration of the influenza vaccine if a patient forgot to bring his/her Ontario health card number?**

The pharmacist needs the patient's Ontario health card number in order to submit a claim for payment through the Health Network System.

## Ministry Payment

**11. How much does the ministry pay pharmacists to administer the influenza vaccine?**

The ministry pays pharmacists:

- \$7.50 for the costs associated with administering an injectable publicly funded influenza vaccine, and
- \$5.00 to administer the publicly funded influenza vaccine by nasal spray (FluMist®).

Pharmacies will not receive payment under the Universal Influenza Immunization Program if administering a non-publicly funded influenza vaccine. (i.e., an influenza vaccine that is not listed on the [Notice from the Executive Officer](#) and shipped to the pharmacy, as per the Universal Influenza Immunization Program).

**12. How much does the ministry pay a pharmacist if they are required to inject epinephrine as emergency treatment for patients experiencing a serious adverse drug reaction due to the publicly funded influenza vaccine?**

The ministry will reimburse pharmacies the acquisition cost (no mark-up, dispensing or service fee) of approved epinephrine auto-injection products up to the total amount reimbursed (i.e., see Table 2 of the [Notice from the Executive Officer](#)) when used in this circumstance for a patient with a valid Ontario health card number.

Pharmacists may only submit claims for payment using the ministry's Health Network System for epinephrine auto-injection of individuals with a valid Ontario health card number.

**13. Does the ministry pay the pharmacist directly or to the pharmacy?**

For pharmacies who hold a Universal Influenza Immunization Program User Agreement with the ministry, payment is paid through the ministry's Health Network System to the accredited pharmacy.

## Pharmacist Training

### 14. Are all Ontario pharmacists able to administer the influenza vaccines to eligible Ontarians?

Only trained pharmacists registered with the Ontario College of Pharmacists as having completed an approved training program may administer the publicly funded influenza vaccine by injection. The injection-trained pharmacists are listed on the Ontario College of Pharmacists member registry website.

Administration of the nasal spray influenza vaccine does not require the same pharmacist training as the injectable.

For more information on pharmacist's training please contact the [Ontario College of Pharmacists](#).

## Pharmacy Participation

### 15. Will all Ontario pharmacies provide the publicly funded influenza vaccine?

No. Only pharmacies approved by the ministry via a [Universal Influenza Immunization Program User Agreement](#) and Health Network Systems Subscription Agreement can provide the publicly funded influenza vaccine to the public.

For more information, please refer to the [ministry's website](#) or email [UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca](mailto:UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca).

### 16. How does a pharmacy get approved to administer the influenza vaccine in Ontario?

To get approved, pharmacy managers must complete the ministry's [User Agreement for Pharmacies Requesting Publicly Funded Influenza Vaccine](#) each year.

For more information on the User Agreement, please email the ministry at [UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca](mailto:UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca).

### 17. What are the User Agreement requirements?

Some of the pharmacy requirements under the User Agreement include:

- Having at least one trained pharmacist on staff to administer the influenza vaccine,
- Meeting Ontario's *Vaccine Storage and Handling Guidelines* and
- Having an approved cold chain inspection of the pharmacy refrigerator by the local public health unit.

For complete information on pharmacy requirements under the User Agreement, please review the information on the [ministry website](#) or email [UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca](mailto:UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca).

### 18. I work at a pharmacy that does *not* provide the publicly funded influenza vaccine. Where do I find information to refer patients to the closest participating pharmacy?

Pharmacies continue to self-promote that they provide the influenza vaccine – flu shot through radio, television and on-line advertisements as well as in-store signage.

The ministry's flu clinic locator website that was previously used for this purpose will not be available this season; however, members of the public and pharmacy staff can email [UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca](mailto:UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca) for [pharmacy and public health unit locations](#).

## Documentation and Record Keeping

### 19. What is the pharmacist required to document when providing the influenza immunization to eligible patients?

In accordance with Universal Influenza Immunization Program requirements and the *Pharmacy Act, 1991*, the pharmacist must keep a record of every dose of publicly funded influenza vaccine administered and must:

- Document the name, strength/dose (where applicable), quantity and lot # of the publicly funded influenza vaccine administered
- Document the time and date the vaccine was administered
- Document the name and address of the patient
- Ensure the consent form is signed and dated by the patient or the patient's authorized representative or substitute decision maker, as applicable

- Document the name, pharmacy address and signature of the trained pharmacist who administered the vaccine
- Provide a written record of the influenza immunization to the patient

Record any serious adverse drug reaction that may or may not result in the administration of epinephrine, and the circumstances relating the administration of the substance. Pharmacists must also meet the Ontario College of Pharmacists' policies and guidelines, such as the [College's Record Retention, Disclosure and Disposal Guideline](#) and [Documentation Guidelines](#).

Please note that pharmacists must enter the patient's date of birth and health card number into the pharmacy system. Failure to do so will affect future claims transactions for non-Ontario Drug Benefit recipients. In addition, by identifying the date of birth, pharmacists can align the appropriate vaccine to the patient's age group.

Documentation forms are not standardized; however, the Ontario Pharmacists' Association provides a comprehensive form that may assist pharmacies with their record keeping obligations under the Universal Influenza Immunization Program. Refer to the Ontario Pharmacists' Association [Influenza Vaccination Toolkit](#)

## 20. How long must I keep the influenza immunization administration record on file?

All documentation records relating to the administration of the influenza vaccine claim are part of the patient's medication record and must be maintained in a readily retrievable format for the appropriate record retention period of at least 10 years from the last recorded professional pharmacy service provided to the patient, or until 10 years after the day on which the patient reached, or would have reached, the age of 18 years, whichever is longer.

Pharmacists are also expected to adhere to the Ontario College of Pharmacists' [Record Retention, Disclosure and Disposal Guidelines](#).

## 21. What will happen if I forget to document or misplace the documentation?

If there is no documentation, incorrect or incomplete documentation, the administration fee claim is subject to recovery by the ministry. Documentation is also important in the event of a vaccine recall, an adverse event following an immunization or if a patient follows up with the pharmacy for their influenza vaccine record.



**22. What documentation must pharmacists provide to the patient after administration of the flu vaccine?**

To help patients keep track of their influenza vaccine, the pharmacist must provide a written record of the influenza immunization product administered including the date.

This can be accommodated by providing the patient with a permanent personal immunization record. Patients should keep this in a safe place and have it available for future immunization visits and/or visits to other health care providers. Patients should also be aware that the information is available on file at the pharmacy.

For more information on forms, pharmacists can refer to the Ontario Pharmacists' Association [Influenza Vaccination Toolkit](#), which includes resources such as a template for patient consent forms, patient questionnaires and permanent personal immunization records.

## Claim for payment through the Health Network System

**23. When should the pharmacist submit the claim for payment for administration of the publicly funded influenza vaccine?**

Pharmacists should submit the claim through the Health Network System the same day they administer the publicly funded influenza vaccine.

Pharmacy students and interns that have valid injection training may administer the influenza vaccine; however, the respective injection-trained supervising pharmacist will submit the claim for payment through the Health Network System.

If a publicly funded influenza vaccine was administered off-site and in compliance with requirement 26 of the User Agreement, pharmacists can submit the claim up to one business day after administration.

**24. How are claims for influenza vaccine submitted through the Health Network System?**

Claims must be submitted using the product's drug identification number (DIN) or (product identification number (PIN) for emergency epinephrine administration). Pharmacists must not enter a drug cost, dispensing fee, or a mark-up for the administration fee. The administration fee of either \$7.50 or \$5.00 will appear in the "dispensing fee" field.

Pharmacists must ensure that the patient's date of birth, health card number and name (as it appears on the health card) are entered as part of the Health Network System claims submission. Failure to do so may impact the ability to submit future claims for these patients. In addition, by identifying the date of birth pharmacists can align the appropriate vaccine to the patient's age group.

In the event of an adverse drug reaction due to an influenza vaccine administered by the pharmacist, pharmacists who administer epinephrine to render emergency assistance to a patient with a valid Ontario health card number may submit the claim using the assigned product identification number (PIN) for the epinephrine product. *Do not enter the drug identification number (DIN), a mark-up or a dispensing fee for this emergency use of epinephrine auto-injection.*

Please refer to question 28 regarding adverse event following immunization reporting requirements.

**25. If a registered nurse at my pharmacy administers the vaccine, am I able to claim those doses through the Health Network System?**

No. Claims are not accepted for vaccinations or emergency use epinephrine auto-injection provided by other health care providers, such as nurses hired for pharmacy clinics. For information on nurse-led pharmacy clinics, please access [the ministry website](#) or email [UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca](mailto:UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca).

**26. How does a pharmacist submit a claim for an Ontario Drug Benefit patient?**

Through the Health Network System, use the appropriate drug identification number (DIN) or product identification number (PIN) if applicable, the intervention code 'PS' as well as the valid pharmacist identification code.

**27. How does a pharmacist submit a claim for a non-Ontario Drug Benefit patient?**

When submitting for a person who does not have Ontario Drug Benefit coverage, pharmacists must submit the following:

- Patient Gender: 'F' = female; 'M' = male
- Patient Date of Birth: YYYYMMDD
- Patient's Ontario health card number
- Intervention codes:
  - PS: Professional Care Services

- ML: Established eligibility coverage (i.e., 1 day of the Plan 'S' coverage)
- Carrier ID: 'S' (This is the plan code for non-ODB MedsCheck Service plan)
- Drug Identification Number (DIN) or product identification number (PIN) if applicable: as per the influenza vaccine administered.
- The valid Pharmacist ID code of the pharmacist who administered the vaccine must be included with the claim.

## Adverse Drug Reactions

### 28. What are the reporting requirements for an adverse event following immunization?

All adverse events following immunization must be reported to the local Medical Officer of Health within seven business days, per section 38 of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*.

For complete reporting requirements, please refer to the pharmacy User Agreement for adverse events. For additional information, please contact your local public health unit. Refer to the ministry website for a list of [Ontario public health units](#).

### 29. If a patient has an adverse reaction to the influenza vaccine, who is responsible for administering the epinephrine auto-injection?

Should the adverse reaction occur at the pharmacy, the pharmacist who administered the influenza vaccine should also administer the epinephrine auto-injection.

Under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*, the administration of a substance by injection is a controlled act which unauthorized persons are prohibited from performing.

Where the administration of a substance by injection is done for the purposes of rendering first aid or temporary assistance in an emergency, individuals are exempted from the prohibition on performing this activity. However, it is advisable to speak with the Ontario College Pharmacists if you have any additional questions about your responsibilities and/or accountabilities in this regard.

For claims submission purposes, the ministry requires the patient's health card number and pharmacist identification for the use of an epinephrine auto-injection.

**30. What documentation does the ministry require for an epinephrine auto-injection claim submission?**

In addition to the reporting requirements for adverse events following immunization per the pharmacy User Agreement, pharmacists must also document when they administer the epinephrine auto-injection for auditing purposes.

The Health Network System claim for the epinephrine auto-injection will follow the claim for the influenza vaccine. Documentation includes:

- Name, pharmacy address and signature of the pharmacist who administered the epinephrine auto-injection
- Name, strength/dose (where applicable) and quantity of the epinephrine auto-injection administered
- Name and address of the patient
- Time and date the epinephrine auto-injection was administered
- Cross-reference with the publicly funded influenza vaccine administered to the same patient

Pharmacies must keep a record when the epinephrine auto-injection was administered for emergency use due to a pharmacist-administered influenza vaccine.

Pharmacists should ensure all documentation is in accordance with the *Pharmacy Act, 1991* and the Ontario College of Pharmacists' policies and guidelines.

**31. What are the record keeping requirements for an epinephrine auto-injection in this circumstance?**

As for any Health Network System claim, pharmacies must keep a record of the required documentation when administration of the epinephrine auto-injection has occurred and then claimed for reimbursement.

Pharmacy documentation must be maintained in a readily retrievable format for the appropriate record retention period of at least 10 years from the last recorded professional pharmacy service provided to the patient, or until 10 years after the day on which the patient reached, or would have reached, the age of 18 years, whichever is longer.

In addition, pharmacists are expected to review and adhere to the Ontario College of Pharmacists' [Record Retention, Disclosure and Disposal Guideline](#).

**32. When submitting the claim for the epinephrine auto-injection due to an adverse reaction from the influenza injection, I notice the payment appears in the “dispensing fee” field – is that correct?**

Yes, the payment appears in the “dispensing fee” field of the claims submission.

## Restrictions

**33. Can pharmacists provide the publicly funded influenza vaccine to residents of long-term care homes?**

No. Administration of the publicly funded influenza vaccine to long-term care residents is not eligible for reimbursement by pharmacists through the Health Network System.

**34. Can pharmacists submit claims for influenza vaccine administration manually to the ministry, using a paper claim?**

No. The ministry does not accept paper claims for publicly funded influenza vaccines.

**35. Can pharmacists submit a claim for influenza vaccines administered by a nurse at a pharmacy clinic?**

No. Health Network System claims are not permitted for vaccination administration by other health-care professionals, such as nurses hired for pharmacy clinics.

Pharmacists who wish to continue providing nurse-led pharmacy influenza / flu clinics to patients must follow the manual process of billing through the Population and Public Health Division, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. For more information on nurse-led pharmacy clinics, please contact Population and Public Health Division at [ontario.ca/influenza](http://ontario.ca/influenza) or email [UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca](mailto:UIIP.MOH@ontario.ca).

**36. Will the ministry reimburse the cost of the epinephrine auto-injection when administered by a nurse?**

No. The ministry will only reimburse the pharmacy via the Health Network System in the event that the patient with a valid Ontario health card number suffers an adverse reaction after a pharmacist administers the publicly funded influenza vaccine.

Nurses who deliver the influenza immunization at pharmacy clinics are responsible for providing their own emergency supplies.

**37. Can pharmacists submit a claim for the epinephrine auto-injection when it is provided to the patient to take home after the influenza vaccine was administered?**

No. Claims submitted for epinephrine auto-injection that are related to the publicly funded influenza vaccine are only reimbursed when the injection is given by the pharmacist as emergency first aid or temporary assistance in the pharmacy as needed after administering the influenza vaccine to a patient with a valid Ontario health card number.

**38. Can pharmacists submit a claim for epinephrine auto-injection for a patient without a valid Ontario health card number?**

No. Pharmacists may only submit claims for payment using the ministry's Health Network System for epinephrine auto-injection of individuals with a valid Ontario health card number.

**39. If the pharmacist recommends a patient get his or her influenza vaccine from their physician, is the recommendation billable under the Pharmaceutical Opinion Program?**

No. All Ontarians are encouraged to receive the flu vaccine. In addition, because its administration is within the pharmacist's scope of practice and requires no permission from a primary care provider, such a recommendation does not meet the criteria of the Pharmaceutical Opinion Program.