

**Ministry for Seniors
and Accessibility**

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January 7, 2021

MEMORANDUM TO: Retirement Homes in Toronto Public Health Unit, Peel Public Health Unit, Region of York Public Health Services and Windsor-Essex County Health Unit

FROM: Denise Allyson Cole
Deputy Minister
Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility

SUBJECT: **Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Administration in Retirement Homes**

Representing another turning point in our fight against COVID-19, the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine will soon be available to residents, staff and essential caregivers in retirement homes in the above-noted regions. Regions continue to prioritize homes for immunization based on risk. As such, you may be invited by your local Public Health Unit or regional representatives to have all residents and remaining staff vaccinated over the next month.

The Moderna COVID-19 vaccination program will target residents, staff, essential caregivers and support workers who have regular interaction with residents and will be administered on-site in the homes. While staff and essential caregivers will be offered the Moderna vaccine as part of in-home clinics, you are encouraged to continue registering staff for hospital clinics to maximize all available vaccines' speed and impact.

Successful implementation of the vaccination program will be dependent on the readiness of homes. Your local Public Health Unit will contact you to partner and with specific details to support effective execution. For further support, the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Long-Term Care have developed an assessment checklist (Attachment 1) to provide guidance and help you plan and prepare.

As a part of that planning, the following steps should also be taken:

- **Consent Forms:** A critical component of the vaccination program is obtaining consent from residents or, if applicable, their Substitute Decision Makers. Consent

must be secured for vaccinations to be given. As such, it is essential that retirement home operators start as soon as possible in securing completed consent forms from those wishing to be vaccinated. It is also important to record who declined vaccination. For your use, I have attached the COVID-19 Vaccine Screening and Consent Form (Attachment 2).

- **IT Readiness:** In partnership with your local Public Health Unit, ensure there are IT protocols in place that define and confirm staff roles and responsibilities in data collection and reporting. As well, ensure staff are appropriately trained in their assigned roles within the on-site vaccination clinics. If staff are identified for IT responsibility by your local Public Health Unit, complete the COVax Users Template for Retirement Homes (Attachment 3).
- **Identification of Participants for Vaccination:** Work with staff, essential caregivers, residents, their substitute decision makers and family members to identify participants for immunization and complete the Vaccine Participants Template for Retirement Homes (Attachment 4) for all participants. This template will be required for upload into the IT system to track vaccinations during on-site clinics.
- **Communications Protocol:** To prioritize residents' safety and health, media events on-site at retirement homes should not be planned. Establish communication plans for media protocols and escalation protocols, as well as other contingency planning, as needed, with your local Public Health Unit.

I want to thank you for your continued commitment and partnership in keeping our most vulnerable Ontarians safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Denise Allyson Cole

c: Jacqueline Cureton, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Dr. Barbara Yaffe, Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health
Dr. Eileen deVilla, Medical Officer of Health, City of Toronto
Dr. Wajid Ahmed, Medical Officer of Health, Windsor-Essex County Health Unit
Dr. Lawrence Loh, Medical Officer of Health, Region of Peel
Dr. Karim Kurji, Medical Officer of Health, York Region
Jay O'Neill, Chief Executive Officer and Registrar, Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority
Cathy Hecimovich, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Retirement Communities Association
Lisa Levin, Chief Executive Officer, AdvantAge Ontario

Attachment 1: Initial COVID-19 Immunization Readiness Checklist to Support Preparations for Moderna Pilots in Long-Term Care and Retirement Homes

Attachment 2: COVID-19 Vaccine Screening and Consent Form

Attachment 3: COVax Users Template for Retirement Homes

Attachment 4: Vaccine Participants Template for Retirement Homes