

## MEMO

**Date:** August 24, 2021  
**To:** Health Sector Regulatory Bodies, Educators & Unions  
**From:** Lanette Siragusa, Chief Nursing Officer, Shared Health  
Dr. Brent Roussin, Chief Provincial Public Health Officer  
**Re:** **Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination of Health Care Workers**

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Manitoba is announcing today that designated employees, including health care workers employed by or working in areas of direct patient/resident/client care, must be **fully vaccinated** for COVID-19 by **October 31, 2021**.

The requirement, to be outlined by Public Health Order, will include all health care workers employed by or working in areas of direct patient/resident/client care in either public or private health care settings, including hospitals, licensed long-term care facilities, community and home care environments.

Health care workers, in this Order, will be defined broadly as staff, physicians, students, contractors and volunteers. Direct health-care providers are further defined as, including but not limited to physicians, nurses, allied health professionals, support services and others deemed appropriate for each site/area/program in public and private health-care settings. The Order includes those direct care providers who may come in contact with patients/residents/clients, patient/resident/client care environments, patient/resident/client care equipment and blood and body fluids.

**Fully vaccinated individuals** are those who have received both doses (any combination) of an approved two dose COVID-19 vaccine (AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Moderna), OR a single dose of an approved single dose COVID-19 vaccine (Janssen/Johnson & Johnson) with more than 14 days having passed since the second dose (or approved sole dose) was received. Acceptable forms of proof will include the Manitoba Immunization Card (digital or physical).

All health care workers are encouraged to get their first vaccine dose as soon as possible. In order to be compliant with this requirement, individuals must receive their **first dose by September 7, 2021**. To be fully vaccinated by the end of October, individuals must receive their **second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine no later than October 17, 2021**.

Individuals who are **not able to be vaccinated** for medical reasons, or who choose not to be vaccinated, will be required to undergo regular COVID-19 testing and will be **required to provide proof of a recent negative test**.

For designated health care workers, the results of a negative COVID-19 test will be considered valid for **48 hours from the time the swab** is performed provided the worker has not developed any symptoms of COVID-19 at the start of their shift. Details specific to testing will be shared in the coming weeks.

The COVID-19 vaccines are proven to be safe and effective. They are the best available means to ensure the protection of health care workers, staff, patients, residents and clients against COVID-19 and as we face the likelihood of a fourth wave, evidence shows these vaccines are very effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death, including against the alpha and delta variants of concern.

As a health care system, we already require proof of vaccination for other infectious diseases such as measles and varicella. With the ongoing risk that COVID-19 poses to our most vulnerable populations and the potential for the fourth wave to have a significant impact on those under the age of 12 (who are not yet eligible for the protection offered by the vaccine), ensuring health care workers and others who work with higher-risk populations is a necessary and appropriate measure.

While a vaccination requirement is expected to be a significant operational undertaking, requiring education and support, we are committed to working with stakeholders and experts over the coming weeks to develop detailed implementation plans and to answer questions from affected individuals.

We appreciate the patience and understanding of all health care workers, educational partners, regulatory bodies and unions as we sort through these details.