

October 15, 2021

Provincial Health Officer Order Regarding Vaccination of Health Professionals

Please be advised that the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) has today posted the Hospital and Community (Health Care and Other Services) COVID-19 Vaccination Status Information and Preventive Measures – October 14th, 2021

Here is the Order: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-hospital-and-community-vaccination-status-information-preventive-measures.pdf>

This new order of the PHO requires regulated health professionals who are employed, contracted, or funded to provide health care services by provincially funded organizations, including health authorities and provincial mental health facilities, to be vaccinated against COVID-19. The order also includes “a person employed, contracted or funded by a person contracted or funded by” an organization to which the order applies. Students accessing care locations must also comply.

To comply with this order, impacted individuals must be fully vaccinated or have started on the series of vaccinations against COVID-19 to continue providing care to clients/patients from October 26, 2021. Individuals who have received only one dose of vaccine by the deadline will need to comply with additional COVID-19 preventive measures specified in the order. Registrants are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the contents of this new order, which include details regarding impacted facilities and vaccination and reporting requirements. Registrants who have questions about whether they are impacted by this order should consult with their employer or contract manager.

Today's order also gives formal notice that other regulated health professionals, categories still to be determined by the PHO, can expect to receive a similar order stating that mandatory vaccination will also apply to their practices if they are providing health care or services. This will include some individuals in private practice. This pending order will specify a deadline by which vaccination will be required; the October 26 deadline will not apply.

The general notice to Health Professionals in today's order states:

TAKE NOTICE *that in accordance with further direction from me, health professionals to be determined by me and their staff, not otherwise required to be vaccinated under the Residential Care COVID-19 Preventive Measures Order or this Order, will be required to be vaccinated by a date to be determined by me, in order to provide health care or services in the Province.*

Today's order sets out an important measure which the PHO has stated is needed to help protect British Columbians, including those who continue to be vulnerable to severe illness and death from COVID-19 even if they are vaccinated, and to assure the public that when they receive health care from a health professional they are not putting their health at risk. As noted in today's Order, this is the best way to protect our clients/patients and others in our service delivery settings from harm.

The College recognizes that the majority of registrants are already taking action to help eliminate COVID-19 in our communities by getting vaccinated themselves and diligently following COVID-19 prevention and control guidelines provided by the BC Centre for Disease Control. Prevention practices at work include:

- appropriate self-screening and client/patient screening,
- wearing a mask,
- maintaining physical distancing wherever possible,
- practicing good hand hygiene, and,
- sanitizing high touch surfaces

As a reminder, it is also important to respond to patient / client questions and concerns about COVID-19 immunization or related health issues in line with your scope of practice, provincial public health guidance, and accepted science and best practices.

CNPBC will provide further updates as more information becomes available.

Warm regards and best wishes for everyone's good health.

Carina Herman

Registrar and Chief Executive Officer
