

## **Guidelines for Prince Edward Island Pharmacies Providing Flu Immunization**

**(This information was reviewed by the Association of Nurses of P.E.I., Managers of Public Health Nursing Services in the Health Regions, the Office of the Chief Health Officer and the P.E.I. Lung Association)**

Immunization administration is an acquired competence that may or may not be part of an individual Registered Nurse's (RN's) scope of practice. It is identified as a "Special Nursing Skill", and any agency or business must have written policies which indicate the competencies and educational preparation for RNs performing these skills, the mechanisms for assessing and maintaining competence, and circumstances under which the skill may be practiced.

### **Public Health Nursing Practice**

Public Health Nursing practice requires nurses to have specific education and certification based on knowledge of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommendations for all immunizations. The certification is obtained upon employment as a Public Health Nurse (PHN) in any of the Health Regions, and re-certification is recommended every three years.

The skill areas include knowledge of vaccines and vaccine preventable diseases, preparations of the vaccines licensed for immunization, efficacy and immunogenicity of the vaccine, recommended use of the vaccine in various situations as relevant to the vaccinee presenting (pre-exposure, post-exposure, outbreak control, universal immunization), schedule and dosage per product and age group, route and site(s) of administration, relevant booster and serologic testing, simultaneous administration with other vaccines, and adverse reactions/contraindications/precautions. In addition, the assessment, consent and educational processes for the client and/or their parent/guardian, record keeping, reporting of adverse reactions, and management of anaphylaxis are required areas of knowledge and preparation for PHNs who administer vaccines.

Storage and handling/transport of vaccines used by PHNs is under strict cold chain procedures.

### **Recommendations for Pharmacies**

1. Pharmacies should ensure that any employee providing immunization within their environs as a public service is a Registered Nurse (RN) who has the required competencies for the vaccine being administered. Pharmacies should also ensure that those RNs have sufficient liability coverage through the Canadian Nurses' Protective Society (CNPS) (with an enhanced plan to cover extended services such as immunization).
2. Pharmacies providing this service should take note of the latest information available from the Office of the Chief Health Officer (CHO), Department of Health and Social Services. Vaccine information fact sheets, adverse reaction reporting information and forms, and a protocol for management of suspected anaphylactic shock in non-hospital settings, are available. Contact the CHO at 902-368-4996.
3. Pharmacies may wish to develop a consent form and immunization record form.
4. All immunizations should be documented and the client given a copy of the record of their immunization with the date and name of the vaccine indicated. Clients should be advised to

inform their physician, travel clinic, public health nursing office or any other health care provider of their status regarding immunization obtained at a pharmacy clinic, if that information is relevant to their subsequent/ongoing care. In future, an Immunization Registry will be available in the Province.

5. Other valuable references are:

- the **Canadian Immunization Guide Sixth Edition 2002**, available through the Canadian Medical Association tel: 613-731-8610, ext. 2307; fax: 613-236-8864. The new version is also available at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-d-gspso/publicat/ci-q--qci/index.html> .
- the annual **National Advisory Committee Statement on Influenza** published in the late summer of each year in the **Canada Communicable Diseases Report** available at [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dqsi\)sp/publicat/ccdr-rmtc/02vol28/28sup/acs5.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dqsi)sp/publicat/ccdr-rmtc/02vol28/28sup/acs5.html)
- **Your Child's Best Shot: A parent's guide to vaccination, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2002**, published by the Canadian Pediatric Society, 100-2204 Walkley Road, Ottawa, Ont., K1G 4G8
- "Flu Watch" available at [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)
- the Lung Association's website – [www.lung.ca](http://www.lung.ca) and search for "flu" or "influenza" to find lots of information for patients and health professionals. Also check under "Societies".

6. Additional information for pharmacists considering organizing influenza clinics is available at the Canadian Coalition for Influenza Immunization web site: [www.influenza.cpha.ca](http://www.influenza.cpha.ca)