

For Immediate Release | March 2, 2022

New locations for COVID-19 vaccine clinics in the Interior

IH WIDE – As COVID-19 vaccination rates continue to increase, Interior Health (IH) plans to streamline its immunization campaign with new clinic locations. Over the coming weeks, the COVID-19 vaccine appointments will move from mass immunization clinics to pharmacies and IH health centres.

“Together with our community partners, we continue to achieve excellent COVID-19 vaccine deployment across the Interior region,” said Susan Brown, Interior Health president and CEO. “We are grateful for their support and will continue to work with them as needed, including the BC Pharmacy Association, to provide access to vaccines.”

People who have not yet received COVID-19 vaccines, including boosters, or pediatric vaccines for children age five to 11, will continue to have many options to book appointments. Children five to 11 can get their vaccines at local IH clinics, and people age 12 and older can get vaccines at participating pharmacies in their community. Currently, more than 90 pharmacies across the Interior region have appointments available for COVID-19 vaccines.

“I would also like to thank the many community volunteers who came forward to assist our immunization efforts across the region,” added Brown. “From retired health care workers who volunteered as way finders, to parking attendants and therapy dog handlers, thank you all for your support as we delivered a historic immunization campaign, together.”

Interior Health will provide ongoing opportunities, such as regular and pop-up clinics, for all eligible ages in rural and remote communities where access to pharmacies is limited.

This transition from larger clinics to pharmacies and health centres comes as 91 per cent of British Columbians age five and older have received one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, 86 per cent have received two doses, and 51 per cent have received three doses.

“During this transition, it’s still important for people to continue to get these vaccines when they are eligible,” said Dr. Sue Pollock, interim chief medical health officer. “This means getting younger age groups their primary series of the vaccine or the booster doses for people age 12 and older to strengthen and maintain their immunity. These steps will reduce the spread of the virus in our communities and disruptions to our lives as a consequence. Most importantly, these vaccines are highly effective against severe disease and hospitalization.”

We recognize and acknowledge that we are collectively gathered on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the seven Interior Region First Nations. This region is also home to 15 Chartered Métis Communities. It is with humility that we continue to strengthen our relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples across the Interior.

Parents and guardians can continue to register their children age five to 11 at www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca or call 1-833-838-2323. Children are eligible for registration on or after their fifth birthday. Children will be invited to get their second dose eight weeks after their first dose.

People age 12 and older will get an invitation to book their booster appointment six months from the date of their second dose. People age 12 and older who have not yet received their first or second dose can drop in at IH clinics.

For more information on getting COVID-19 vaccines, including a list of all Interior Health COVID-19 immunization clinics and other resources, visit: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/health-and-wellness/disease-outbreaks/covid-19>.

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