

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

For Community Immunization

April 13, 2026

This guidance outlines infection prevention and control (IPC) measures required for the set-up and safe operation of immunization clinics in community settings (e.g., community pharmacies, public health units, schools, community centres, and arenas).

Screening for Viral Respiratory Illness Symptoms

- All clinical and non-clinical [health care workers](#) (HCWs) and [clients](#) must screen themselves for signs and symptoms of viral respiratory illness (VRI), such as influenza and COVID-19.
 - These signs and symptoms include but are not limited to fever/chills, new/worsening cough, sore throat, **shortness of breath, vomiting*, or diarrhea***.
** May be present in some patients with VRI, especially children.*
- Clients who have VRI symptoms should stay home until their fever (if present) has resolved and they feel well enough to participate in daily activities.
- For health authority-operated immunization clinics, all HCWs and patients/residents/clients must follow applicable [provincial IPC policies and directives](#). In other settings, such as schools and community centers, clients are encouraged to wear a mask at their own discretion based on personal choice.

Clinic Layout and Supplies

Set up the immunization clinic as follows:

- Provide hand hygiene stations at entrance and exit points, registration desks, immunization stations, after care areas, and for general use.
- Set up signage to self-screen for VRI symptoms for all individuals entering the clinic at each designated entry point.
- Have a separate area for processing people who require extra support (e.g., a person who is unable to wear a mask because of a physical, behavioural, or cognitive impairment or health condition).
- Use [signs and posters](#) to promote IPC practices such as respiratory and hand hygiene.
- Respect personal space and avoid overcrowding.

Ensure equipment and supplies are available:

- Alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) with 70% alcohol content and/or hand hygiene sink(s) with soap and water.
- Cleaning and disinfection wipes that have a drug identification number from [Health Canada's approved list of hard-surface disinfectants](#).
- Sharps containers at all immunization stations.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) as required (e.g., medical mask, gloves, and eye protection). Provide a medical mask to clients who ask for one.
- Tables and chairs with cleanable surfaces (e.g., non-porous and smooth, free of cracks and crevices, can withstand frequent cleaning and disinfection).

Health Care Worker Safety

Self-screen for VRI symptoms before each shift

- Clinical and non-clinical HCWs, volunteers, and others must self-screen for VRI symptoms prior to each shift, in accordance with employer communicable disease plans.
- Stay home if you are feeling sick or experiencing signs and symptoms of VRI.
- Follow measures outlined in the [VRI health care worker self-check and safety checklist](#).

Hand hygiene

- Perform frequent hand hygiene using ABHR or soap and water.
- Perform hand hygiene between every client interaction, between breaks, before wearing PPE, after removing each piece of PPE, after using the washroom, and any other time hands are potentially contaminated.

PPE for staff

- Clinical and non-clinical HCWs, volunteers, and others must follow applicable [provincial IPC policies and directives](#), including any medical mask requirements when providing care for a client in health authority-operated immunization clinics.
- Community pharmacists providing immunizations should follow mask guidance from their regulatory college.
- Conduct a [point-of-care risk assessment](#) to determine if any additional PPE is needed.
- If gloves are worn, they must be changed in between each client. Perform hand hygiene after removing gloves.
- Non-client-facing personnel (e.g., custodial or administrative) in community settings should follow their organizational communicable disease prevention plan on the use of medical masks and other PPE.
- Health care workers should review and follow guidance on appropriate use of [PPE](#), including how to wear a medical mask and proper donning and doffing of PPE.

Cleaning and Disinfection

Ensure proper cleaning and disinfection of surfaces

- Clean and disinfect the immediate work and client area after each client leaves the immunization station.
- Use friction action and move from clean to dirty areas when cleaning.
- Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces twice a day and as needed.
- Clean and disinfect public washrooms twice a day and as needed.
- At the end of the day, clean and disinfect:
 - Tables and chairs.
 - All other horizontal surfaces or commonly touched surfaces.
 - Physical barriers (e.g., dividers or screens, if used).
 - Transport coolers and equipment.
- Ensure biomedical waste is properly collected and disposed at the end of the day.
- See the [British Columbia Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections in all Healthcare Settings and Programs](#) for more information.