

Respiratory Illness Season Preparedness

Residents' Session with the Ministry of Long-Term Care

October 9, 2024

Ontario Association of Residents' Councils
Ministry of Long-Term Care

Land Acknowledgement

Together, let us now pause as we acknowledge the Indigenous Peoples of all the lands that we are on today, from wherever we are virtually participating in today's meeting. Let us take a moment to acknowledge the importance of the land we each call home.

We do this to affirm our commitment and responsibility to improving relationships between nations, and to improving our own understanding of local Indigenous Peoples and their cultures.

We acknowledge the ancestral and unceded territory of all the Inuit, Métis, and First Nations people who call this nation home.

Let us now join in a moment of reflection to acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past and to consider how each of us, in our own way, can move forward in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

Agenda

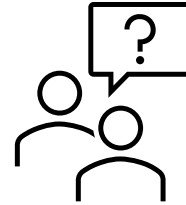
Topic	Time	Lead Speakers
Introductions and housekeeping items	2:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• OARC and MLTC
Presentation from MLTC	2:05 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MLTC
Fireside Chat and Q&A	2:20 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All

Webinar Housekeeping



Chat Box

The Chat feature is **disabled** during this session.



Question Box

Type questions in the Q&A box. We will answer as many as possible during the presentation.



Recording

A recorded version of this webinar will be available on OARC's website.
www.ontarc.com



Evaluation

After the webinar, a pop-up screen asking you to complete a survey will appear. Your feedback and suggestions are appreciated.

2024-25 Respiratory Illness Season

- The Ministry of Long-Term Care is anticipating another challenging respiratory illness season, with RSV, COVID-19, and influenza circulating over the fall and winter.
- We continue to work closely with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Ministry of Health to monitor and assess the risk of respiratory illness cases and outbreaks in homes and in the community.
- The Ministry recently sent out an information package to licensees that included information about vaccines, supplies from the provincial portal, and a fact sheet for residents.
- This may include considering more enhanced requirements for homes; but these are not planned at this time.



Projections and Surveillance for 2024-25 Season

- **COVID-19** activity has been increasing over the summer and is currently at 'high' levels
- **Influenza** season has not started
 - Based on the southern hemisphere, anticipate pre-pandemic 'typical' timing for influenza peak
 - Anticipating a longer influenza season with a mix of H3N2 and H1N1 strains
- **RSV** season has not started
 - Anticipate similar season to last year, further mitigated by continued use of RSV vaccines in LTCH, and introduction of an RSV product for infants this year

Changes to Outbreak Definition and Guidance

- **Updated respiratory outbreak definition** – now one definition for all respiratory outbreaks including COVID-19
 - Streamlined approach to declaring outbreaks (COVID-19 same as other viruses)
 - Ensuring outbreaks are declared when there is evidence of transmission in the home, avoiding unnecessary application of outbreak measures
- **Updated management of cases and contacts guidance**
 - All contacts managed the same way, in terms of Additional Precautions, regardless of virus
 - Criteria for declaring an outbreak over is now the same between COVID and other viruses
 - Streamlined outbreak management guidance document for easier reading
 - Isolation time is still longer for COVID cases than for other viruses due to longer period of infectiousness



Influenza (Flu)

- You are encouraged to get your flu shot every year to prevent serious illness.
- Flu can be especially dangerous for older people.

COVID-19

- It is strongly recommended that you also get the COVID-19 vaccine even if you have gotten COVID-19 or the vaccine before.
- You can get another shot 6 months (or as early as 3 months) after your last one, or after having had COVID-19.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

- You are encouraged to get your RSV vaccine if you didn't get it last year.
- If you got your RSV vaccine last year, you do not need another one this year.



Pneumococcal

- Anyone can get pneumococcal disease. You may be at a higher risk if you are 65 years or older or have certain medical conditions or risk factors.
- If you previously have not received 2 doses of pneumococcal vaccine and are 65 years of age and older, you should get a dose of the new pneumococcal vaccine.
- You will only need 1 lifetime dose of the new pneumococcal vaccine.

Please Note: The flu, COVID-19, RSV, and pneumococcal vaccines can be administered at the same time if they are available at the same time.

Staff at your home can help to answer any questions that you may have, clarify your eligibility, and let you know when each vaccine is available.

Vaccine Co-administration

Based on data from last year's programs it became apparent that co-administration of seasonal vaccines was not common, with **54% of LTCH not co-administering** COVID-19 and influenza vaccines.

RSV Co-administration

- Last season, a 2-week interval was recommended between administration of RSV vaccines and other immunizations
- This season, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) suggests **it is acceptable and supported to administer both seasonal and non-seasonal vaccines with RSV**
- Concurrent administration of RSV to adults 60 years of age and older with other recommended vaccines can be considered in alignment with basic vaccine principles
- When recommending co-administration, health care providers are to consider patient preferences, risk factors or likelihood of patient returning for additional vaccine doses

Long-Term Care Home (LTCH) Vaccine Survey Results – 2023/24 Respiratory Season

- Flu survey results for 2023/2024 respiratory season
 - Health care worker influenza immunization coverage among LTCHs (n=401) = 60.8%
 - Resident influenza immunization coverage among LTCHs (n=401) = 88.3%
 - Resident RSV immunization coverage among LTCHs (n=401) = 73.1%
- 2023/2024 uptake and provincial average (not by home or PHU)
 - Overall provincial uptake for flu vaccine estimated at 28.6%
 - RSV provincial uptake is currently unknown
- For the 2024/2025 influenza season, LTCHs will be requested to report healthcare worker and resident immunization rates to the Ministry of Health via the survey tool that has been used in the previous several years. Once analysis has been completed, immunization coverage rates will be published by Public Health Ontario.

What to expect if your home is in outbreak

If your home, or the area of the home you live in, is experiencing an outbreak of a respiratory illness, you can expect the following:

- Homes will work with the local public health unit to manage the outbreak response, following Ministry of Health guidance as well as the IPAC Standard under the Fixing Long-Term Care Act.
- This includes ensuring that the rights of residents are fully respected, and that residents' psychosocial and other needs are prioritized.
- Cohorting may be used, and group activities may be cancelled to keep affected residents separate, as appropriate.





What we have heard:

- Residents would appreciate more frequent updates from the Ministry of Long-Term Care regarding trends and projections.
- More frequent updates are especially appreciated if any enhanced measures are put in place.

What we are doing:

- The Ministry of Long-Term Care will be scheduling another information session with residents in early 2025 to provide updates.



Questions about today's presentation?

Please contact the Ministry of Long-Term
Care at lrc.info@ontario.ca
Or Jacky.Sweetnam@ontario.ca

Thank you for joining us today!