

Updated Information from the Ministry of Health regarding the 3rd dose of the COVID-19 Vaccine for LTC Residents

On August 18th 2021 the Ministry of Health has updated recommendations around the 3rd dose of the COVID-19 vaccine for vulnerable populations.

The potential impact of the risk of transmission of the Delta variant of concern in vulnerable elderly populations who live-in high-risk settings (i.e. congregate living with other vulnerable, high-risk adults) has been assessed, particularly in the context of emerging literature on the reduced immune response and the more rapid waning of antibody responses in this population. Vaccines have been effective against COVID-19 in Long Term Care Homes in the 3-4 months after vaccination, but outbreaks are still occurring. In these outbreaks, fully vaccinated residents are being infected, and some have died. As community disease rates increase, outbreaks will become more common, and the differential rate of disease and harm in high-risk congregate living settings as compared to the community will once again increase.

At this time third doses of the COVID-19 vaccines will be offered for the following groups to boost the primary series:

- **Residents of Long-Term Care Homes (LTCH), High-Risk Retirement Homes (RH) and Elder Care Lodges**

The recommended interval for residents of LTCH is **at least 5 months after the second dose**. This is consistent with the schedule of other vaccines that similarly utilize a third dose to boost the immune response to a primary series.

To protect the vulnerable elderly in high-risk congregate care settings, it is strongly recommended that all people that come into close contact (e.g. healthcare workers and other support staff, family, friends, caregivers) with them complete a full two dose vaccine series (i.e. “ring vaccination”).

The Ministry of Health is closely following the research on the safety and effectiveness of a third dose and acknowledges the limited or absence of evidence for the use of a third dose of the currently available COVID-19 vaccines in this population. However current literature is showing the potential waning vaccine-induced immunity in the nursing home population, especially in the context of the Delta variant. **It is recommended that the individual receive a third dose of an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), and the same vaccine product as their second dose if possible.**

*In preparation for the 3rd dose of vaccination we are asking that eligible residents (or their SDM/POA if not capable) complete the [consent form](#) and return it to the contact below by **September 7, 2021**. If the dates of previous vaccination are unknown please leave blank and staff will complete this information.*

Grace Manor: Jenny Steward – Jenny.Steward@HCH.ca Ext. 5275

Faith Manor: Romayne Manners - Romayne.Manners@HCH.ca Ext. 5360

For Vaccine information click on the links below:

[COVID-19 Vaccination Information Sheet](#)

[Ministry of Health COVID-19 Vaccination Recommendations for Special Populations](#)