

<p>IN THIS ISSUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEW! Fall 2008 Update: Accelerated Immunization Screening Strategy • New Canadian Guidelines on Sexually Transmitted Infections 	<p>FROM:</p> <p>David L. Mowat, MBChB MPH FRCPC Medical Officer of Health</p>
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Peel Public Health Accelerates Student Immunization Record Screening

- **Beginning this fall, Peel Public Health will be screening all student immunization records in the two major Boards of Education in the 2008-2009 school year.**
- The measles outbreak in spring 2008 emphasized the importance of ensuring that all students meet the mandatory vaccine requirements and that their immunization records are up-to-date.
- As of May, 2008, 140 schools in the Region of Peel were screened and more than 30,000 records have been updated. From October 2008 – June 2009, the immunization records of students at the remaining 239 schools in the Peel District School Board and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board will be screened.
- To assist you in meeting your patients' needs, Peel Public Health is developing an Immunization Records Toolkit which will be distributed to Peel physicians this fall.

Background

- The *Immunization of School Pupils Act* (1990) requires all children under 18, attending school in Ontario, to be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella or to have a valid exemption.

- Students whose immunization records are not up-to-date after several requests from Peel Public Health may face suspension from school.
- Parents are required to ensure that Peel Public Health has their child's most up-to-date immunization record.

Increased Requests

From **October 2008 – June 2009**, you can expect to receive an increased number of requests from your patients for the following services:

- Immunizations
- Medical Exemptions from immunization requirements
- Immunization Records (Dates of vaccination)

How Physicians Can Help:

- Ensure that vaccinations are spaced as per the recommendations in the *Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule for Ontario - February 2005*. **Incorrect spacing of vaccinations is the most common reason that immunizations are deemed incomplete.** Catch-Up Schedules can be reviewed at:
www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/immun/pdf/schedule.pdf.

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- Ensure that students immunized according to foreign schedules are up-to-date as per the Ontario schedule. Many foreign vaccination schedules do not meet the Ontario requirements. Peel Public Health offers **free translation of immunization records** to all clients 18 years or under, enrolled in either a licensed day nursery or an educational institution within the Region of Peel.
- Remind parents to notify Peel Public Health each time their child receives a vaccination. Most parents are not aware of their obligation to submit immunization records to Peel Public Health.

Medical Exemptions

- Medical exemptions are given when a physician verifies an allergy or a previous adverse reaction to vaccine components.
- Temporary medical exemptions have a specific end date and are given when a physician verifies pregnancy or the child is receiving a specific medical treatment and vaccination should be delayed.
- Please direct parents requiring exemptions for their child to contact Peel Public Health at **905-799-7700**. Parents will be provided information about the process and the required forms.

FOR PHYSICIAN USE ONLY:

For information related to immunization record screening call **905-791-7800 ext. 6422** (then press 1) for direct access to the Immunization Records Team.

New Canadian Guidelines on Sexually Transmitted Infections

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has released an updated version of the Canadian Guidelines on Sexually Transmitted Infections. These updated guidelines provide recommendations for the prevention, diagnosis, management and treatment of STIs in Canada based on the evidence available as of January 2008.

The new version of the guidelines has been binder-formatted to facilitate the addition of updated information. In order to receive notice of future updates, PHAC is requesting physicians to complete and submit the "Invite Letter" located at the front of the guidelines binder.

Copies of the guidelines will soon be available through Peel Public Health when picking up your vaccine orders.

The guidelines and Invite Letter are also available on-line at:
www.publichealth.gc.ca/sti