In November 2016, the Government of Alberta announced changes to the Public Health Act, aimed at increasing immunization rates, improving capacity to manage outbreaks in schools and communities, and increasing the quality of immunization services.

To help meet these goals, in October, 2018, the Government of Alberta established the new Immunization Regulation (Alta. Reg. 182/2018). The Immunization Regulation increases responsibilities for health professionals, including ALL Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs).

### As of December 17, 2018:

1. **All** LPNs are required to report adverse events following immunization whether or not the individual LPN administered the vaccine.

2. **LPNs who administer vaccines** must follow the requirements related to storing, handling, and transporting of vaccines as outlined in the Immunization Regulation. LPNs providing public funded vaccines (i.e. employed with Alberta Health Services) must also follow parameters outlined in the Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine.

### As of January 1, 2021:

3. (i) If an LPN recommends an immunization but does not receive consent, or the LPN determines that the immunization is contraindicated, an assessment report must be submitted electronically to the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of Health no later than 7 days after the assessment.

3. (ii) An LPN who administers a vaccine will be required to report the immunization electronically to Alberta Health: Chief Medical Officer no later than 7 days after the immunization.

3. (iii) An LPN who receives a written record about past unreported immunization shall ensure that a report about the unreported immunization is submitted to the CMO.

**Note: Administering a vaccine is an LPN Specialty. See section 13(4) of the Licensed Practical Nurses Professional Regulation.**

### 1. Reporting Adverse Events

As of December 17, 2018, **ALL LPNs** are required to report adverse events following immunization (AEFI). Section 1(2) of the Immunization Regulation sets out what unfavorable health occurrences are considered as an AEFI.

Information on when and what to report involving an adverse event following immunization are included in the Alberta Health document Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) Policy for Alberta Immunization Providers.

One highlight of the new reporting requirements for all health practitioners including LPNs includes:

- reporting an AEFI to Alberta Health Services (AHS) within 3 days from determining that an AEFI has occurred as defined in section 1(2) of the Immunization Regulation.

### Call-in Reporting

The AHS Central AEFI Reporting Line at 1-855-444-2324 (1-855-444-CDCI) manages all reportings of AEFIs as part of the AHS Province-wide Immunization Program. AHS will provide specific direction for LPNs employed by AHS Public Health.

Immunization providers including LPNs employed **outside** the AHS health care system are required to report an AEFI by the AHS Central AEFI Reporting Line call-in number.

Please visit the AHS website for further information.

### 2. Alberta Vaccine Cold Chain Policy

Vaccines may become less effective or destroyed when exposed to temperatures outside the recommended range or inappropriate exposure to light. “Cold Chain” refers to the processes and procedures that maintain...
optimal temperature and light conditions during the transport, storage, and handling of vaccines.\(^1\)

All LPNs who have completed advanced training and are authorized by the CLPNA to administer vaccines must have a thorough knowledge of the vaccine storage and handling procedures and must follow the requirements set out in Part 3 of the *Immunization Regulation*. In addition, those providing publicly funded vaccines must follow the parameters set out in the *Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine*.

The “Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine” sets out cold chain practices in Alberta and defines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in managing the storage and handling of publicly funded vaccines, such as community providers including LPNs and AHS.

### 3. Electronic Reporting of Immunizations and Immunization Assessments to Alberta Health

The *Immunization Regulation* introduces another new requirement: health practitioners, including LPNs, will be required to report immunizations and immunization assessments **electronically** to Alberta Health within seven days. These electronic reporting requirements will take effect on **January 1, 2021**.

AHS Public Health is currently able to meet this requirement.

The *Immunization Data Submission and Response Guidelines* describe specific requirements for reporting electronically.

The CLPNA will provide more information in the coming months on LPN responsibilities for electronic reporting of immunizations and immunization assessments.

### Other Considerations

**First Nations and Inuit Health**

First Nations and Inuit Health is within the jurisdiction of Health Canada. LPNs employed by the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIBH) will continue to report AEFIs as well as continue to follow the vaccine cold chain policy and reporting pathways as currently provided by the FNIBH. LPNs must consult with FNIBH employers and follow FNIBH policies and procedures.

**Immunization Programs Outside of AHS**

LPN with the immunization specialization whose roles involve administering vaccines outside of the AHS system i.e., in industry, clinics or private institutions) must ensure they adhere to the *Immunization Regulation* requirements.

**LPN Immunization Specialty**

LPNs must have the authorization to practice in the Immunization Specialty as per the *Licensed Practical Nurses Profession Regulation* to administer vaccines for the purpose of providing immunizations.

### LPN Immunization specialty

Only LPNs who have been authorized by the CLPNA Registrar (i.e., with an authorization on your practice permit) are authorized to immunize. Please note the following important parameters on immunizing:

- you must have completed advanced training in immunizations
- the recipient of the immunization is **5 years of age or older**;
- the employer has in place protocols respecting immunization; and
- an authorized practitioner is available for consultation while immunization is being performed.\(^2\)

### Want More Information?

For further information on Alberta’s immunization programs and policies, all current Alberta Immunization Policy documents can be found on the Alberta Health website at:


### Examples of Reporting Adverse Events Following Immunization

As presented above, all LPNs will be responsible for reporting adverse events following immunization.
Information on when and what to report involving an adverse event following immunization are included in the Alberta Health document *Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) Policy for Alberta Immunization Providers*.

The following are just two possible examples that require an LPN to look into the need to report an immunization reaction.

**Scenario #1**: A young child is seen in an emergency department with a red, swollen upper arm. The LPN assesses the child, places the child and parents in the observation room to wait for the physician. The physician’s diagnosis is “cellulitis is temporarily related to MMR vaccine” which was administered 2 days ago. A health care professional, who may include the LPN, must report the adverse event to AHS within 3 days. If the LPN was unsure whether the adverse event should be reported, the LPN should consult with the AHS Central AEFI Reporting Line to make that determination.

**Scenario #2**: An LPN who works in a private travel clinic meets with a new client who has requested immunizations in preparation for her trip to Costa Rica. The LPN refers the client to the travel clinic physician, who writes a prescription for tetanus and hepatitis vaccines. The LPN administers the vaccines in accordance with the physician order. Two days later, the client returns to the travel clinic with a generalized rash. The physician diagnoses an allergic reaction temporally related to the vaccine. Although this is a private travel clinic (not funded by AHS) either the physician or the LPN must report the adverse event to AHS within 3 days. Detailed information on adverse events following immunization can be found in the *Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) Policy for Alberta Immunization Providers*. As noted in scenario #1, if the LPN is unsure whether the adverse event should be reported to AHS, the LPN should phone the AHS Central AEFI Reporting Line for a consultation.
This Fact Sheet is linked to other documents:
Immunization Regulation
Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) Policy for Alberta Immunization Providers
Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine
Immunization Data Submission and Response Guidelines

REFERENCES

2 Licensed Practical Nurses Profession Regulation, Alta Reg 81/2003, s. 13(4).

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