

## Program/Service Information Report

# Vaccine Administration in LTC/RHs

January-December 2023

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**To:** Board of Health

**Meeting Date:** March 6, 2024

**Report No.:** **BH.01.MAR0624.C03**

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## Key Points

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- Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) has taken a more active role to assist long-term care homes (LTC) and retirement homes (RH) in the planning and execution of their influenza and COVID-19 vaccination clinics.
- In addition to the Ministry reporting requirements, WDGPH initiated a survey to collect influenza and COVID-19 fall immunization rates in LTCH/RH to monitor progress and inform local immunization strategies earlier to allow for planning.
- WDGPH completed the vaccination campaign significantly earlier than in previous years, allowing homes to have immunization protection during respiratory illness.
- Some areas of improvement have been noted for the 2024 vaccination campaign which will continue to ensure the most efficient and supportive methods are used.

## Program Requirements

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### Compliance with OPHS and Accountability Indicators:

In compliance

Not in compliance

## Highlights

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The WDGPH 2023-24 flu season officially started on August 27, 2023, and peaked between December 30, 2023, and January 6, 2024.

Like influenza, COVID-19 experiences a lull in the summer months, although not a complete lull as seen with influenza. COVID-19 cases peaked the week of December 10-16, 2023.

The Ministry of Health has been collecting influenza immunization rates of healthcare workers in Long-Term Care Homes since 1999. In 2020-21 the Ministry began collecting influenza immunization rates of residents and staff in LTCH and hospitals.

Historically, health units collected this information from facilities and sent it to the Ministry, but as of 2021-22, Public Health Ontario began collecting this information on behalf of the Ministry.

WDGPH made COVID and influenza vaccines available from the week of October 2nd and concluded the administration campaign in LTC and RHs on December 4, 2023.

The following are the data results from the WDG survey which was administered to LTC and RHs in early December.

The overall influenza vaccination rate for employees across all LTCH and RH in the area is 71% and 59%, respectively. As seen in Table 1, the median rates for both LTC and RHs have fallen slightly.

**Table 1:** Percentage of employees with influenza vaccine by facility type and year

Facility Type	2023 Median Rate	2022 Median Rate	2023 Minimum	2023 Maximum
Long-Term Care Home	<b>66%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>98%</b>
Retirement Home	<b>57%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The influenza vaccination rate for residents across all LTCH and RH is 87% and 90%, respectively (see Table 2) which demonstrates a strong willingness to get the influenza vaccine. The overall COVID-19 fall booster rate for residents across all LTCH and RH is 72% and 71%, respectively. This has made a considerable drop from previous years, with homes reporting “vaccine fatigue” as the main reason for refusal. These numbers could also be impacted by the timing of the Spring vaccine campaign, which garnered some confusion from individuals as to when they should receive their fall vaccine. WDG continued to voice support for administering the COVID-19 vaccine at 3+ months however there was some hesitation surrounding this notion.

**Table 2:** Percentage of Long-Term Care and Retirement Home residents with influenza and seasonal COVID-19 vaccine by year

Facility Type	Influenza Vaccination Rate		Seasonal COVID-19 Vaccination Rate	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
Long-Term Care Home	87%	90%	74%	82%
Retirement Home	90%	93%	75%	82%

**Table 3:** Minimum and Maximum influenza and seasonal COVID-19 vaccine rates 2023

Facility Type	Influenza Vaccination Rate		Seasonal COVID-19 Vaccination Rate	
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Long-Term Care Home	76%	95%	40%	100%
Retirement Home	70%	100%	0%	100

One of the biggest successes noted for the 2023 vaccination season was the early administration and completion of vaccination clinics within both the long-term care and retirement homes. Table 4 shows that most of the influenza and COVID-19 clinics were conducted and completed in October and all vaccine efforts were reported as complete by December 4, 2023.

Early administration can provide a good level of protection to residents before the respiratory season begins. Future research and reporting efforts will look to provide further insight into the effects that early vaccination efforts have on our respiratory seasonal outcomes (i.e. outbreaks, severity of illness). Vaccinations continue to be an effective way to prevent severe illness and death from COVID-19 and influenza. Vaccination is the primary strategy to minimize the overall risk and impact of these respiratory outbreaks.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 4.** Percentage of Long-Term Care and Retirement Homes that began to provide influenza and COVID-19 seasonal immunization by month and year.

Long-Term Care Homes		
	Influenza vaccine	COVID-19 Fall booster
October	80%	67%
November	13%	33%
December	7%	0%
Retirement Homes		
	Influenza vaccine	COVID-19 Fall booster
October	87%	66%
November	9%	30%
December	4%	4%

Table 5 highlights the number of homes that have finished their vaccine efforts for the year. The homes who reported not having finished their campaign gave the reason that they will continue to offer the vaccines to newly admitted residents as well as staff members and therefore they marked their clinic efforts as “incomplete”.

**Table 5:** Percentage of Long-Term Care and Retirement Homes who finished their 2023-2024 Influenza and Seasonal COVID-19 Vaccination Efforts by year.

Facility Type	Influenza Vaccination Campaign	Seasonal COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign
Long-Term Care Home	40%	40%
Retirement Home	74%	70%

Based on the experiences of 2023 and feedback provided by the homes via the WDGPH survey, improvements for the Fall 2024 campaign include:

- Additional follow-up with homes to discuss and gather additional feedback from the 2023 vaccination campaign.
- Streamline the vaccination process with expanded vaccination support roles.
- Creating additional speaking opportunities with MOH/AMOH and community partners/members regarding the various vaccines available to LTC/RHs
- Collaborate with multiple teams across the agency to plan our fall influenza and COVID-19 2023 vaccination campaign.

WDGPH will continue to focus efforts on ways to ensure vaccination clinics are occurring as early as possible for homes to reap the benefits of early protection for residents. The 2024 campaign will include the RSV vaccine and survey data if this continues to be publicly funded for LTCHs and RHs.

## Related Reports

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N/A

## References

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1. Public Health Agency of Canada. An Advisory Committee Statement (ACS) National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) Canadian Immunization Guide Chapter on Influenza and Statement of Seasonal Influenza Vaccine for 2022-2023 [Internet]. 2022 Oct [cited 2023 Mar 7]. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/2p99rw2j>

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## Appendices

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**Appendix A**

**Appendix B**

## Appendix A

### Influenza Immunization Rates at Long-Term Care Homes in WDG as of December 4, 2023

Facility	Employees			Residents		
	Number of Employees	% Immunized <sup>a,b</sup>	Medically Exempt	Total Residents	% Immunized <sup>a</sup>	Medically Exempt
Avalon Care Centre LTCH	111	58%	0	101	85%	0
Caressant Care Arthur LTCH	80	81%	0	61	93%	0
Caressant Care Fergus LTCH	55	46%	0	57	83%	0
Caressant Care Harriston LTCH	100	54%	0	74	89%	1
Dufferin Oaks Long-Term Care Home LTCH	223	71%	2	154	87%	0
Eden House Care Facility RH and LTCH	107	54%	0	73	88%	0
Elliott Community LTCH	269	87%	0	85	91%	0
LaPointe-Fisher Nursing Home LTCH	111	83%	0	68	90%	0
MORRISTON PARK NURSING HOME LTCH	34	94%	2	19	95%	0
Royal Terrace LTCH	119	29%	0	67	87%	0
Shelburne Long Term Care LTCH	60	60%	0	45	78%	0
St Joseph's Health Centre LTCH*	NA	NA	NA	236	80%	1
Strathcona Long Term Care LTCH	100	77%	3	95	76%	0
The Village of Riverside Glen LTCH	255	56%	0	190	87%	1
Wellington Terrace LTCH	330	98%	7	172	94%	10

\* Vaccination rates for LTCH and hospital employees are combined, so LTCH rates were not calculated

Data Caveats:

- Percent (%) immunized data includes only known immunizations. The immunization rate could be higher, as "unimmunized" or "immunization status unknown" were reported together by facilities.
- The term employees includes permanent or temporary/full-time or part-time employees who receive a direct paycheck from the facility (i.e., on the facility's payroll), regardless of clinical responsibility or patient/resident contact. This category does not include staff on long-term leave (e.g., maternity, paternity, disability)
- Long-Term Care and Retirement Homes reported facility vaccination rates to WDG Public Health via an online survey. Data reflect seasonal immunizations provided to staff/residents up to December 4, 2023.
- Vaccination rates from each facility were used to calculate facility summary statistics.

## Appendix B

### Influenza Immunization Rates at Retirement Homes in WDG as of December 4, 2023

Facility	Employees			Residents		
	Number of Employees	% Immunized <sup>a,b</sup>	Medical Exemption	Total Residents	% Immunized <sup>a</sup>	Medically Exempt
Avalon Retirement Lodge RH	34	79%	1	59	70%	0
Bethsaida Retirement Home RH	12	83%	0	24	88%	0
Birmingham Retirement RH	31	65%	0	58	85%	0
Caessant Care Arthur RH	11	64%	0	31	71%	0
Caessant Care Fergus Retirement Home RH	14	50%	0	29	90%	0
Caessant Care Harriston RH	14	36%	0	23	91%	0
Chartwell Montgomery Village RH	70	39%	0	217	81%	1
Chartwell Wellington Park Retirement RH	60	40%	0	112	98%	0
Countryview Retirement Residence RH	6	33%	0	6	83%	0
Elliott Community RH	269	87%	0	121	91%	0
Fox Run Retirement Home RH	5	100%	0	9	100%	0
Hamilton's Hometown Retirement living RH	0		0	10	90%	0
Heritage House RH	30	67%	0	57	72%	0
Heritage River Retirement Residence RH	56	75%	0	117	92%	0
Highland Manor Retirement Lodge RH	44	86%	2	81	94%	1
Lord Dufferin Centre RH	20	35%	0	49	94%	0
Norfolk Manor RH	28	25%	0	34	85%	0
Royal on Gordon RH	72	46%	1	84	86%	1
Royal Terrace RH	119	29%	0	47	96%	2
Shelburne Retirement RH	11	73%	0	24	96%	0
Stonelodge Retirement Home RH	56	23%	0	84	89%	0
The Village of Riverside Glen RH	175	63%	3	193	94%	0
Village of Arbour Trails RH	157	52%	5	361	99%	3

#### Data Caveats:

- Percent (%) immunized data includes only known immunizations. The immunization rate could be higher, as “unimmunized” or “immunization status unknown” were reported together by facilities.
- The term employees include permanent or temporary/full-time or part-time employees who receive a direct paycheck from the facility (i.e., on the facility’s payroll), regardless of clinical responsibility or patient/resident contact. This category does not include staff on long-term leave (e.g., maternity, paternity, disability)
- Long-Term Care and Retirement Homes reported facility vaccination rates to WDG Public Health via an online survey. Data reflect seasonal immunizations provided to staff/residents up to December 4, 2023.
- Vaccination rates from each facility were used to calculate facility summary statistics. One retirement home in WDG did not submit data and was therefore not included in overall Retirement Home vaccination rates.