COVID-19 Vaccination for People with Disabilities

Figures and Tables

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Out-of-Home Vaccination



Information About the Vaccine

- Information about where, when, and how to get vaccinated is in multiple formats including: easy-to-read, audio/video, braille, high-contrast and large font, accessible infographics, etc.
- Include site-specific information about the process of vaccination, including clinic walk-throughs, maps, video/audio descriptions, etc.



Booking

Multiple booking methods (both phone with live assistance and web) for vaccination in various settings (i.e., pharmacy, primary care, mass clinic).
 Information on which accessibility

- features are available in each clinic location is available.
- Communicate needed accommodations and book essential caregivers at the same time.
- Schedule second dose at the same time as the first for ease of booking.



Travel to the Clinic

- Free, accessible transportation programs are noted on the website.
- Timing suggestions for booking accessible transportation are provided.
- Well-signed areas for accessible drop-off and pick-up are outside the clinic.



Waiting in Line

- Identifiable accessibility champion onsite to answer accessibility questions, organize accommodations, and support people with disabilities throughout vaccination.
- A support person or animal can accompany an individual throughout the entire vaccination process.
- Seating, wheelchairs, and other mobility devices are available.
- Signs direct individuals through accessible routes.
- Physical distancing and other public health measures are strictly enforced, except for individuals who cannot wear or change their masks.
- Rapid lines or access options available for individuals who have difficulty waiting in line or who may miss their accessible transport home, if delayed.



Registering

- Greeters should not ask individuals to prove disability.
- When registering, individuals wearing clear masks are available to assist with communication.
- Alternative forms of communication (i.e., clipboard to write, ASL interpreter, etc.) should be available upon request with notice.

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Second Dose

- Should be booked at the same time and place, if desired.
- Individuals who do not show up for or book a second dose appointment should be supported to arrange a second accessible dose.



Post-Vaccination Care

- During 15-minute observation period, individuals can remain in their vaccination seat to reduce movement and adjustment to a new setting.
- If needed, individual can move around during observation period.
- Information, including possible side effects should be available in multiple formats (i.e., easy-to-read, large font, oral etc.).
- Have mechanisms to collect feedback on accessibility in accessible formats.

Getting Vaccinated

- Vaccinators should obtain informed consent, through the most acceptable means of communication.
- Individuals being vaccinated have the option to lie down, receive the shot in their thigh, or have a private booth.
- On-site attendant or vaccinator can assist with removing jacket or rolling up sleeves, when asked.
- Administer vaccine to the person being vaccinated and essential caregivers.

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Start

Out-of-Home Vaccination

Information About the Vaccine

- Information about where, when, and how to get vaccinated is in multiple formats including: sign language interpretation, easy-to-read, audio/video format, braille, high-contrast and large font, accessible infographics, etc.
- Include site-specific information about the process of vaccination, including clinic walk-throughs, maps, video/audio descriptions, etc.

Booking

- Multiple booking methods (both phone with live assistance and web) for vaccination in various settings (i.e., pharmacy, primary care, mass clinic).
- Information on which accessibility features are available in each clinic location is available.
- Opportunity to communicate needed accommodations and book essential caregivers for vaccination at the same time.
- Second doses are scheduled at the same time as the first for ease of booking.
- Travel to the Clinic
 - Free, accessible transportation programs are noted on the website.
 - Timing suggestions for booking accessible transportation are provided.
 - Well-signed areas for accessible drop-off and pick-up are outside the clinic.

Waiting in Line

 Identifiable accessibility champion on-site to answer accessibility questions, organize accommodations, and support people with disabilities throughout vaccination.

- A support person or animal should be able to accompany an individual throughout the entire vaccination process.
- Seating, wheelchairs, and other mobility devices are available.
- Signs direct individuals through accessible routes.
- Physical distancing and other public health measures are strictly enforced, except for individuals who cannot wear or change their mask.
- Rapid lines or access options available for individuals who have difficulty waiting in line or who may miss their accessible transport home, if delayed.

Registering

- Greeters should not ask individuals to prove disability.
- When registering, individuals wearing clear masks are available to assist with communication.
- Alternative forms of communication (i.e. clipboard to write, ASL interpreter, etc.) should be available upon request with notice.
- Getting Vaccinated
 - Vaccinators should obtain informed consent, through the most acceptable means of communication.
 - Individuals being vaccinated have the option to lie down, receive the shot in their thigh, or have a private booth.
 - On-site attendant or vaccinator can assist with removing jacket or rolling up sleeves, when asked.
 - Administer vaccine to the person being vaccinated and essential caregivers.
- Post-Vaccination Care

- During 15-minute observation period, individuals can remain in their vaccination seat to reduce movement and adjustment to a new setting.
- If needed, individual can move around during observation period.
- Information, including possible side effects should be available in multiple formats (i.e., easy-to-read, large font, oral, etc.).
- Have mechanism to collect feedback on accessibility in accessible formats.
- Second dose
 - Should be booked at the same time and place, if desired.
 - Individuals who do not show up for or book a second dose appointment should be supported to arrange a second accessible dose.

Figure 1. Map of Sample Accessible Out-of-Home COVID-19 Vaccination Process for Persons with Disabilities

Presents the possible paths through out-of-home vaccination. Accessible information, booking processes, travel to the clinic, waiting in line, registration, vaccination, post-care, and second dose preparations are the critical steps where communications, physical and social and sensory environmental communications are important. For further details on important considerations within each of these steps, see Table 1. ASL, American Sign Language.

In-Home Vaccination

Information About the Vaccine

 Information about where, when, and how to get vaccinated is in multiple formats including: easy-to-read, audio/video, braille, high-contrast and large font, accessible infographics, etc.



Preparation for Second Dose

- Should be booked at the same time and place, if desired.
- Individuals who do not confirm a second dose appointment should be supported to arrange a second accessible dose.



Booking

- Multiple booking methods (both phone with live assistance and web) for vaccination in various settings (i.e., pharmacy, primary care, mass clinic).
- Information on which accessibility features are available in each clinic location is available.
- Communicate needed accommodations and book essential caregivers at the same time.
- Schedule second dose at the same time as the first for ease of booking.



Post-Vaccination Care

- Information, including possible side effects, should be available in multiple formats (i.e., easy-to-read, large font, oral etc.).
- Have mechanisms to collect feedback on accessibility in accessible formats.



Individuals Coming to the Home

 Must wear appropriate PPE and be familiar with an individual's risk factors and accessibility needs.



Getting Vaccinated

- Vaccinators should obtain informed consent, through the most acceptable means of communication.
- Individuals being vaccinated have the option to lie down, receive the shot in their thigh, or have a private booth.
- Vaccinator can assist with removing jacket or rolling up sleeves, when asked.
- Administer vaccine to the person being vaccinated and essential caregivers.

In-Home Vaccination

Start

Information About the Vaccine

- Information about where, when, and how to get vaccinated is in multiple formats including: sign language interpretation, easy-to-read, audio/video format, braille, high-contrast and large font, accessible infographics, etc.
- Booking
 - Multiple booking methods (both phone with live assistance and web) for vaccination in various settings (i.e., pharmacy, primary care, mass clinic).
 - Information on which accessibility features are available in each clinic location is available.
 - Communicate needed accommodations and book essential caregivers at the same time.
 - Schedule second dose at the same time as the first dose for ease of booking.

Individuals Coming to the Home

- Must wear appropriate PPE and be familiar with an individual's risk factors and accessibility needs.
- Getting Vaccinated
 - Vaccinators should obtain informed consent, through the most acceptable means of communication.
 - Individuals being vaccinated have the option to lie down, receive the shot in their thigh, or have a private booth.
 - Vaccinator can assist with removing jacket or rolling up sleeves, when asked.
 - Administer vaccine to the person being vaccinated and essential caregivers.
- Post-Vaccination Care

- Information, including possible side effects should be available in multiple formats (i.e., easy-to-read, large font, oral, etc.).
- Have mechanism to collect feedback on accessibility in accessible formats.

Preparation for Second Dose

- Should be booked at the same time and place, if desired.
- Individuals who do not confirm a second dose appointment should be supported to arrange a second accessible dose.

Figure 2. Map of Sample Accessible In-Home COVID-19 Vaccination Process for Persons with Disabilities

Presents the possible paths through in-home vaccination. The steps are similar on information, booking, post-care, and preparing for the second dose as for out-of-home vaccination, but vaccinators coming into the home should wear appropriate PPE and understand accessibility needs to support people with disabilities getting vaccinated in their home.

Information about the vaccine, decision to get vaccinated, and booking process

- Communication
 - Plain language and easy-to-read translation about when to get vaccinated, how vaccines work, how to get vaccinated, how to understand media about rare vaccination side effects, and the vaccination journey.
 - Multiple, accessible formats of information, advertisements, and booking modalities (including information in multiple languages, plain text, pictorial representation, and text-to-speech compatible).
 - Provide videos, pictures, site maps, and written easy-to-read documents to guide the vaccination journey, especially if people cannot preview the site ahead of time.
- Physical
 - Accessible booking website (i.e., screen readable, keyboard input, alternative text, no flashing components, etc.).
- Social and sensory environment
 - Web, phone, text, and primary care physician-based alternatives for booking vaccination

Eligibility/burden of proof

- Communication
 - Information on required documents or processes for vaccination should be available online, if absolutely necessary.
- Physical

- Allow for paper or electronic documentation, if absolutely necessary.
- Social and sensory environment
 - Service providers do not ask for proof of disability.

Accessible line, approach, and entrance to vaccination center

Communication

- Clear, large high-contrast signage indicating location of vaccination centre, line start/end, directional traffic, protocols, required questions, etc.
- International Symbol of Accessibility at accessible entrance.
- Clipboards to allow for written communication, clear masks, and sign language interpreters to communicate with people who are d/Deaf or hard of hearing.
- Any critical written communication should be available in braille cards or read to individuals who cannot read.
- Physical
 - Accessible entrance (wide doorway, low-force or automatic doors, ramp, no steps, etc.).
 - Signage indicating accessibility and how to request accommodations.
 - Nearby accessible parking and transportation stops.
 - Accessible waiting areas with chairs for those unable to stand in long lines.
 - Option to be vaccinated in a car for drive-through sites.
 - Availability of wheelchairs on site to be used if needed, and cleaned between uses.

- Adequate spacing and strict public health measures to reduce exposure.
- Tactile paving to guide people with visual disabilities.
- Space/seat for support person and resting area for support animal with water bowls available.
- Accessible washrooms should be available.
- Social and sensory environment
 - Provide a number to call/text before arrival to get support, accommodations, or immediate service on arrival (i.e., mask wearing exemption, wheelchair assistance, etc.).
 - Have greeters present to assist patients with visual, physical, or cognitive disabilities.
 - Ensure public health measures are strictly adhered to or enhance at certain locations for safety of higher-risk individuals.
 - Provide a scent-free environment.
 - Allow a support person to accompany people into the vaccination site (i.e., sign language interpreter, family member, PSW, etc.).
 - Allow service/support animals to accompany individual.

Vaccination experience

- Communication
 - Ensure informed consent is obtained and the vaccination process is explained in clear, plain language.

- Clipboards, clear masks, and sign language interpreters to communicate with d/Deaf or hard of hearing patients.
- Physical
 - Option to lie-down for vaccination.
 - Option to receive vaccine in the thigh (anterolateral thigh is authorized as a secondary injection site).
 - Allow caregiver or support person to sit beside the individual.

Social and sensory environment

- Provide safe environment for individuals who have difficulty wearing face masks.
- Separate table at each site that can accommodate individuals with disabilities (i.e., extra time, caregiver support, etc.).
- Ensure that a quiet, reduced sensory environment is available.
- Provide a rapid line or expedited service for people with disabilities who have difficulty waiting, being in a sensory environment, or have scheduled accessible transportation.

Waiting period

- Communication
 - Bulleted, large-print handouts and alternative formats are available for key information.
 - Plain language and easy-to-read translation about post-vaccination protocols and monitoring side effects.

- Provide risk communication about any side effects.
- Physical
 - Allow caregiver or support person to sit beside the individual.
 - Have non-seated spaces for wheelchair users and clear pathways in between areas for people with visual impairments.
 - Ensure waiting area is not a far walk from the vaccination site or provide the option of staying in-place, instead of moving from station to station.
 - Provide a space to move during waiting period if staying in one place is hard.

Social and sensory environment

- Provide opportunities to ask questions or discuss concerns about postvaccine side effects.
- Provide a safe space within the setting if the sensory or physical environment is overwhelming or the individual is stressed and needs space to decompress.

Follow-up information and second appointment

Communication

- Accessible and easy-to-read follow-up information with instructions for second dose of a two-dose vaccine booking or changes to booking (i.e., timing, location, etc.) communication.
- Individuals who do not show up for/book a second dose of a two-dose vaccine should be supported to arrange a second accessible dose.

Social and sensory environment

- Endeavour to keep first and second doses of a two-dose vaccine at the same location and time.
- Allow people with disabilities to provide feedback on accessibility in accessible formats.

Table 1. Key Accessibility Pillars Throughout the Vaccination Process in the Domains of Communications, Physical, and Social and Sensory Environment

*Key accessibility considerations through each phase of the vaccination process. This table was adapted from McKee et al.*¹⁹ *PSW, personal support worker.*

Accessible communication dimension	Number (percent) of PHUs (N=34)
Accessible website (easy-to-read, multiple formats, etc.)	
Yes	11 (32%)
No	23 (68%)
Multiple booking options	
Web and Phone Booking Available	30 (88%)
Web only booking	4 (12%)
Phone number available	
Yes	31 (91%)
No information	3 (9%)
Sign language interpretation available	
Yes	3 (9%)
No information	31 (91%)
Information about requirements to move between stations at	
the vaccination centre	
Yes	4 (12%)
No information	30 (88%)
Second appointment provided at first appointment	
Yes	15 (44%)
Νο	12 (35%)
No information	7 (21%)

 Table 2. Breakdown of Communication Accessibility Features of Ontario PHU Websites

Table reporting the communications accessibility features publicly available on Ontario's 34 PHU websites. Coding is based on information publicly available PHU websites, as of May 7, 2021 (see methods section below). However, this may not sufficiently capture the full degree of accessibility or inaccessibility of a vaccination site. In addition, several locations noted that additional needs could be met to accommodate people with disabilities, but where the measures were not clear or publicly available online, were not included in this analysis. PHU, public health unit.

Physical accessibility dimension	Number (percent) of PHUs (N=34)
Ability to book an appointment time or wait time estimate	
Yes	17 (50%)
No	1 (3%)
No information	16 (47%)
Private vaccination station available	
Yes	3 (9%)
No information	31 (91%)
Accessible entrance available	
Yes	6 (18%)
No information	28 (82%)
Wheelchair available on-site	
Yes	6 (18%)
No information	28 (82%)
Accessible post-vaccination waiting area	
Yes	3 (9%)
No information	31 (91%)
Drive-through option available	
Yes	4 (12%)
No information	30 (88%)
Ability to request home vaccination	
Yes	15 (44%)

No	2 (6%)
No information	17 (50%)

Table 3. Breakdown of Physical Accessibility Features of Ontario PHU Websites

Table reporting the communications accessibility features available on Ontario's 34 PHU websites. Coding is based on information publicly available on PHU websites, as of May 7, 2021 (see methods section below). However, this may not sufficiently capture the full degree of accessibility or inaccessibility of a vaccination site. In addition, several locations noted that additional needs could be met to accommodate people with disabilities, but where the measures were not clear or publicly available online, were not included in this analysis. PHU, public health unit.

Social and sensory environment accessibility dimension	Number (percent) of PHUs (N=34)
Ability to bring care partner	
Yes	23 (68%)
No information	11 (32%)
Specialized clinic or clinic hours	
Yes	3 (9%)
No information	31 (91%)
No requirement/burden to offer proof of disability	
Yes	1 (3%)
No	1 (3%)
No information	32 (94%)
Ability to move around while waiting during the observation	
period	
Yes	1 (3%)
No	2 (6%)
No information	31 (91%)
Face mask exemption policy	
No	3 (9%)
No information	31 (912%)

Table 4. Breakdown of Social and Sensory Environment Accessibility Features of VaccinationOptions Described on the Websites of Ontario's 34 PHUs

Table reporting the communications accessibility features available on Ontario's 34 PHU websites. Coding is based on information publicly available PHU websites, as of May 7, 2021 (see methods section below). However, this may not sufficiently capture the full degree of accessibility or inaccessibility of a vaccination site. In addition, several locations noted that additional needs could be met to accommodate people with disabilities, but where the measures were not clear or publicly available online, were not included in this analysis. PHU, public health unit.



Figure 3. Number of Accessibility Dimensions for COVID-19 Vaccination Described on Each Ontario PHU Website

The number of accessibility dimensions described on each PHU website ranged from 1 to 10, out of the 18 key dimensions measured. The median was 5 (IQR 4-6). PHU, public health unit. IQR, interquartile range.



Figure 4. Adults with IDD with at Least One Dose of COVID-19 Vaccine, as Compared to Adults without IDD

Bar graph presenting the percentage of Ontario adults with IDD, with at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, by age, as compared to Ontario adults without IDD, from December 15, 2020, to June 7, 2021. IDD, intellectual or developmental disabilities.



Figure 5. Adults with IDD with at Least One Dose of COVID-19 Vaccine, by Age, in Ontario, from March 29 to June 7, 2021

Line graph presenting the percentage of Ontario adults with IDD with at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, by age, from March 29 to June 7, 2021. IDD, intellectual or developmental disabilities.