

Routine Vaccinations



Toolkit

PURPOSE

This toolkit provides relevant background information and key messages for engaging on Routine Vaccinations in Ontario as a core [Neighbourhood Pharmacies](#) advocacy issue.

TOOLKIT

To support advocacy on the issue of Routine Vaccinations in Ontario, Neighbourhood Pharmacies has developed this customized toolkit to highlight the role pharmacy teams can play. The Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada, in partnership with [19 to Zero](#), has launched a new campaign called [One in Four](#) to raise awareness about missed routine vaccinations amongst children and adults as a result of the pandemic.

The goal of this toolkit and key messages is to strengthen pharmacy's voice as a unified sector on the issue of Routine Vaccinations and the greater role that pharmacy teams can play in delivering routine vaccinations in Ontario. As frontline healthcare hubs in communities across Ontario and Canada, pharmacies and pharmacy teams are effectively positioned to share their perspectives on *how policy decisions impact people*.

This toolkit includes seven resources:

1. **Issue Background**
2. **Media Release**
3. **Key Messages**
4. **Qs & As**
5. **Social Media Key Messages**
6. **Advocacy 101: Suggestions for Meeting with an Elected Official**
7. **Advocacy 101: Meeting Report**

You will see Neighbourhood Pharmacies posting messages from our Routine Vaccinations campaign on social media. We encourage and invite you to support and amplify these messages, strengthen the voice of our sector, and purposefully contribute to this conversation. Please visit our website for position statements and key messages on our Association's other [Focus Issues](#).

For more information, contact Jennifer Deschenes, Director of Communications and Stakeholder Relations, at jdeschenes@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca.



ISSUE BACKGROUNDER

ROUTINE VACCINATIONS

Routine vaccinations are provided to children and adults throughout their lifetime to prevent viruses, such as HPV, shingles and pneumonia, amongst others, from wreaking havoc on one's own health and the surrounding communities.

Routine vaccinations have historically been provided through public health clinics or by family physicians.

A national survey, completed in September 2021 in partnership with 19 to Zero, has revealed that one in four adults has missed or is unsure if they have missed a routine vaccination for themselves or their child due to the pandemic.

When only factoring children, the data is even more concerning, suggesting that up to 35 per cent of children may have missed a critical routine vaccine. This troubling drop has placed Canada on the cusp of a preventable secondary public health crisis.

Unfortunately, given the overwhelming focus on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and the necessary public health restrictions enacted over the last year and a half, there have been unintended consequences, including the cancellation of in-school vaccine clinics.

Fortunately, there is a solution, and it lives within five kilometres of 95 per cent of Canadians. Pharmacists are already able to administer vaccinations in every province, including the flu shot. They have also played a critical role throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, having administered over 10 million COVID-19 vaccines in Canada.

The [One in Four](#) campaign aims to educate Canadians about the concerning drop in routine immunizations throughout the pandemic, advocate for additional means to access these easy and convenient vaccines and complement the ongoing efforts of family physicians and public health clinics throughout the country.

[Oneinfour.ca](#) provides information, and an online petition concerned Canadians can sign to show their support for actions that ensure we keep our families and communities healthy and safe.



MEDIA RELEASE

Pharmacies Calling for Access to Routine Immunizations to Help Protect Ontarians

Pharmacies across Ontario are calling for the ability to administer routine vaccinations after Ontarians missed their routine vaccinations due to COVID-19

TORONTO, ONT. (October 20, 2021) – Canadians have done the right thing to protect themselves and their loved ones against COVID-19, but in the process, routine immunizations have fallen to the wayside, risking a rise in entirely avoidable illnesses.

A poll undertaken by [19 to Zero](#) and commissioned by the [Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada](#) (Neighbourhood Pharmacies) found that as many as one in four adults has missed, or is unsure if they have missed, a routine vaccination for themselves or their child. Additionally, the data collected suggests that up to 35 per cent of children may have missed a critical routine vaccination.

“Located within five kilometres of 95 per cent of Canadians, community pharmacists’ top concern is the health of the communities we serve,” says Sandra Hanna, Neighbourhood Pharmacies CEO. “The drop in routine vaccinations is extremely concerning and is why we are asking the Government of Ontario to enable pharmacists to administer these potentially life-saving vaccines. Recent polling suggests that close to 70 per cent of Canadians support routine vaccinations being made available in pharmacies,” notes Hanna. “By providing Ontarians with an easy to access and convenient way to receive these vaccines, pharmacists, working alongside physicians and our health system partners, can reduce the current strain on the health system brought about by the pandemic, all the while ensuring Ontarians are protected from preventable illnesses.”

Pharmacies have proven themselves as invaluable healthcare partners working alongside physicians in the fight against COVID-19. They’ve stepped up as trusted healthcare professionals and to provide COVID-19 vaccines to their communities. Over 10 million vaccines have been administered through community pharmacies, and close to six million Canadians get their flu shot from pharmacies each year.

“We have seen throughout the pandemic a drastic drop in routine vaccination coverage,” explains Dr. Jia Hu, Chair of 19 to Zero. “Our recent poll, undertaken in partnership with the Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada, showed that 70 per cent of missed routine vaccinations could have been avoided had there been greater access to healthcare providers who administer vaccines,” says Dr. Hu. “As a physician, I have seen the critical role played by pharmacists throughout the COVID-19 vaccination efforts and annual flu shot campaigns throughout the country. By enabling pharmacists to administer routine vaccines, Ontario would truly have an ‘all hands on deck’ approach to ensuring our communities remain safe and healthy.”

Now, pharmacy teams across Ontario are asking the government to unlock the ability of pharmacy to protect Ontarians against more than just COVID-19 and the flu but also illnesses such as pneumonia, HPV, shingles and more. If they have access to immunization records and the ability to



administer vaccines, pharmacies can become a convenient, accessible point of care for Ontarians to access the routine vaccinations that keep them safe. Additionally, the ability to immunize Ontarians can continue the close working relationship pharmacies have with doctors' offices and public health as partners in helping the healthcare system recover from the strain brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Help pharmacists keep Ontarians safe from a resurgence of easily avoidable illnesses by visiting www.oneinfour.ca and telling government to allow pharmacists to administer routine vaccinations.

About the Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada

Neighbourhood Pharmacies represents Canada's leading pharmacy organizations, including chain, banner, long-term care, specialty pharmacies, grocery chains, and mass merchandisers with pharmacies. We advocate for pharmacies' role in caring for Canadians, both behind and in front of the counter. We aim to advance sustainable healthcare for all stakeholders by leveraging close to 11,000 pharmacies conveniently located in virtually every community throughout the country. Pharmacies are integral points of patient care.

About 19 to Zero

19 to Zero is a dedicated coalition of academics, public health experts, behavioural economists, and creative professionals working to understand, engage with, and ultimately shift public perceptions and behaviours towards vaccination to combat COVID-19 and other illnesses. www.19tozero.ca

SOURCE Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada and 19 to Zero

For further information: Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada, 416-221-9100, info@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca



KEY MESSAGES

These key messages can be used in interactions with media, patients, government, and other stakeholders to support a unified position on the issue of Routine Vaccinations for our sector.

One in four adults has missed or is unsure if they have missed a routine vaccination for themselves or their child due to the pandemic.

- Canada is on the cusp of a preventable secondary public health crisis. When applied to children, the results are even more concerning: data suggests that up to 35 per cent of children may have missed a critical routine vaccine.

Canadians have taken extraordinary steps to keep themselves and their families safe from the COVID-19 virus.

- Families have stayed at home, unable to celebrate life milestones, waiting patiently for their turn to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in hopes that life may soon return to normal.

The focus on COVID-19 has resulted in unintended consequences.

- Public health clinics and in-school clinics have been cancelled due to the pandemic. Doctors' offices have been forced to reduce their hours. Ensuring all Canadians are up to date on their routine immunizations will require extraordinary efforts by all providers – pharmacy stands ready to help!

More needs to be done to increase availability and access to vaccinations.

- Survey data suggests that many Canadians failed to receive routine vaccines throughout the pandemic due to restricted access to doctors' offices and public health clinics.

Pharmacy can play an important role in ensuring Canadians receive access to the vaccinations they need.

- Pharmacists have administered over 10 million COVID-19 vaccines across Canada and are counted on by close to six million Canadians each year for their flu vaccine.

Canadians are supportive of increasing their pharmacist's role to protect themselves and their families. According to a recent 19 to Zero survey commissioned by Neighbourhood Pharmacies:

- Almost 70 per cent of Canadians support routine vaccinations being made available at pharmacies.
- 70 per cent of delayed or missed vaccinations could have been avoided with improved access to a healthcare provider.
- 95 per cent of Canadians live within five kilometres of a pharmacy.

Canadians want an easy and convenient way to access the routine vaccinations they need to keep them and their families safe.

- 95 per cent of Canadians live within five kilometres of a pharmacy. Year after year, pharmacists are reported as one of the most trusted and accessible members of Canadian's healthcare teams.



ROUTINE VACCINATIONS Qs & As

We've put together potential questions you may be asked on this issue and have suggested these informative responses you can provide.

1) Question: "Tell me about the campaign!"

Answer:

- Neighbourhood Pharmacies, in partnership with 19 to Zero, has launched a campaign to advocate for pharmacies to administer routine vaccinations for adults and children.
- While Canadians have done the right thing during the pandemic by staying home and staying safe, they have unintentionally been putting themselves and their loved ones at risk for other illnesses, including HPV, shingles, and pneumonia, as a result of public health clinics and doctors' offices being forced to close or reduce their hours due to COVID-19.
- None of us want a repeat of COVID-19, nor a resurgence of completely avoidable illnesses, but given the drop in routine vaccinations, Canada stands at the cusp of additional outbreaks throughout our communities.
- Recent polling suggests that one in four parents has missed or is unsure if they have missed a routine vaccination for themselves or their child due to the pandemic.
- The stats are even more concerning for children: data suggests that up to 35 per cent of children may have missed a critical routine vaccine.

2) Question: "What is the risk to Ontarians as a result of the drop in routine vaccinations due to the pandemic?"

Answer:

- Ontarians have made enormous sacrifices over the last year and a half to keep their families safe. Families have been unable to celebrate important milestones together and have had to visit their loved ones in long-term care through a glass window.
- Unfortunately, despite doing all the right things, there have been unintended consequences of the pandemic, including a major drop in routine vaccinations that are proven to prevent illnesses that can easily be avoided, such as HPV, shingles, and pneumonia.
- Even before the pandemic, we were experiencing a drop in routine vaccines. This increased drop has the potential to cause additional outbreaks in our schools and communities, which could result in further stress on our health system.
- We know that vaccines are the number one defence against these illnesses. Pharmacists are committed to working alongside physicians and public health to ensure our communities remain safe and healthy.



3) Question: “Why should pharmacists administer routine vaccines in addition to physicians and public health clinics?”

Answer:

- COVID-19 has truly demonstrated the power of vaccines and their ability to prevent the spread of illnesses throughout our communities.
- But the reality is that routine vaccines, used to prevent illnesses such as HPV, shingles and pneumonia, have been critical tools to preventing outbreaks for many years.
- As our health system continues to grapple with the realities of the pandemic, it is critical that we have an “all hands on deck” approach to preventing additional illnesses and keeping our communities safe.
- Pharmacies have played a pivotal role in vaccination efforts by administering more than 10 million COVID-19 vaccines across the country, and they’re experienced in administering flu shots. Every year, close to six million Canadians get their flu shots in pharmacies. Pharmacies are ready and well equipped to support the health system with routine vaccinations.
- Pharmacists have long been a trusted source of care for Ontarians. Pharmacists working alongside physicians and the broader health system to administer critical vaccines would go a long way towards ensuring that Ontarians are protected against preventable illnesses.

4) Question: “Do you foresee pharmacies administering routine vaccines into the future, or is this a short-term solution to address the drop in vaccinations due to the pandemic?”

Answer:

- Ontarians have made enormous sacrifices over the last year and a half to keep their families safe. Families have been unable to celebrate important milestones together and have had to visit their loved ones in long-term care through a glass window.
- Unfortunately, the unintended consequences of the pandemic include a major drop in routine vaccinations that are proven to prevent illnesses that can easily be avoided, including HPV, shingles, and pneumonia.
- Even prior to the pandemic, we were experiencing a drop in routine vaccines. To bend this curve, it is more important than ever to provide Ontarians with a convenient and accessible way to receive their routine vaccines. Recent polling suggests close to 70 per cent of Canadians support routine vaccinations being made available in pharmacies.
- It is critical that all healthcare partners, including pharmacists, physicians, and others, work together so that families and communities are protected from preventable illnesses.



ROUTINE VACCINATIONS SOCIAL MEDIA KEY MESSAGES

Conversations on hot-button policy priorities often take place in real-time, especially on social media. Social media can be an ideal 'place' to engage and weigh in on these policy conversations while they're happening!

Please follow Neighbourhood Pharmacies [@pharmacy_CAN](#) on Twitter and [Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada](#) on LinkedIn to stay up to date on our advocacy and engagement on this issue and for easy opportunities to engage by re-sharing content.

Please post and share [One in Four](#) content and messaging on your social media channels and with your employees, members, and networks. Please remember to retweet/share our posts and tag us in your posts.

You can also follow your local elected official through their social media accounts, respond and interact with them by @mentioning them in the posts we've developed below, designed to promote the messages detailed in our campaign.

You can use this social content as a guide:

- One in four adults has missed or is unsure if they have missed a routine vaccination for themselves or their child due to the pandemic. This is an emerging health crisis that can be avoided if we act now. Find out more at [oneinfour.ca](#) #OneInFour
- Did you know that over 10 million COVID-19 vaccines in Canada have been administered in pharmacies? Pharmacies stand ready to work alongside our health system partners to ensure all Canadians have the vaccines they need. Visit [oneinfour.ca](#) for more info. #OneInFour
- Did you know that each year close to six million Canadians rely on their pharmacist for the flu shot? Pharmacies stand ready to work alongside our health system partners to ensure all Canadians have the vaccines they need. Visit [oneinfour.ca](#) for more info. #OneInFour
- Ontarians have done everything they can to stop the spread of COVID-19. Now we must take action to keep our families and communities healthy and safe. Find out more at [oneinfour.ca](#) #OneInFour
- Routine vaccinations are more important now than ever. 1 in 4 adults has missed a regularly scheduled vaccination for themselves or their child due to COVID-19. This is an emerging public health crisis, and one that cannot be ignored. Find out more at [oneinfour.ca](#) #OneInFour
- Up to 35 per cent of children have missed a routine vaccination due to the COVID-19. Pharmacies stand ready to work alongside our health system partners to ensure all Canadians have the vaccines they need. Visit [oneinfour.ca](#) for more info. #OneInFour



ADVOCACY 101 SUGGESTIONS FOR MEETING WITH AN ELECTED OFFICIAL

1. Interact professionally with staff

- ✓ Polite, professional interactions with the official's staff are important.
- ✓ The staff's perspective can influence your ability to book a meeting, follow-up meeting or any future interactions.

2. Gather information

- ✓ Gather and learn basic information about the official and the area they represent.

3. Arrive on time

- ✓ Elected officials have busy schedules.
- ✓ It's important to be prompt, even if this means starting early.
- ✓ Keep timing in mind. If you have an agreed-upon time limit, do not exceed the limit unless the official is open or willing to do so.

4. Prepare for your discussion

- ✓ Allow yourself the time needed to review and understand your key messages and determine what, precisely, you are keen to convey during this interaction.
- ✓ To establish a collegial rapport, it can help to consider topics where you may have shared interest. For example:
 - Do you have a mutual friend, associate, or acquaintance?
 - Are you involved in local community groups, perhaps similar to the official?
 - Can you share a story about something in the news where they were positively featured?
 - Based on your earlier review of their basic information, do you have the same/similar: education, family composition, pastimes?
- ✓ Any opportunity to demonstrate sincere shared interests can help build your relationship.

5. Maintain focus on local issues

- ✓ Remember, the official will be most interested in how this issue impacts votes in their community, so prepare to illustrate your point(s) from this perspective.

6. Demonstrate your knowledge

- ✓ Be prepared to respond to questions about yourself and your perspective.
- ✓ If you're asked a question to which you cannot provide an immediate answer (e.g., regarding data/metrics, etc.), politely inform the official you will follow up with a response as soon as possible.
- ✓ Following the meeting, connect with your organization or Neighbourhood Pharmacies for any additional information you may need to provide your response.



7. Remember to “leave something behind”

- ✓ The www.oneinfour.ca campaign website can be shared with the official before or after your interaction.
- ✓ You need not refer to the campaign specifically during your interaction, where time is best spent on the discussion. However, the campaign succinctly presents valuable information that can be easily referenced by the official or staff following the meeting, to further drive home your key messages.

8. Detail the interaction

- ✓ As soon as possible following the meeting, make notes of the key points discussed, highlight any questions asked, and indicate the prevailing tone.
- ✓ A ‘Meeting Report’ is included in the toolkit to support you with this piece.
- ✓ Please share the meeting highlights with your organization’s government relations/PR/advocacy team and Neighbourhood Pharmacies.

9. Follow up with a ‘thank you’

- ✓ Within ten days of meeting with the official, follow up with a ‘thank you’ note.
- ✓ Your communication should touch on the key points of your discussion and advocacy.

10. Begin planning your next interaction

- ✓ Consider this meeting as the first step towards establishing a relationship with the official.
- ✓ Give some thought to other ways in which you can engage with this person going forward.

Be patient. The offices of elected officials are often busy places with many issues simmering. Results will likely not be immediate, but they may indeed come in time, after a series of interactions and a good deal of effort.



ADVOCACY 101 ELECTED OFFICIAL MEETING REPORT

Thank you for providing this update on your recent meeting!

Sharing your insights and the details of your interaction will help us understand:

- Whether messages from our industry are resonating with government
- Issues that are most interesting to officials
- How we can position ourselves to achieve the best results

Please complete and email this form to your government relations team and Jennifer Deschenes, Director of Communications and Stakeholder Relations at Neighbourhood Pharmacies, ideschenes@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE INFORMATION BELOW

Meeting/Interaction date:

Requested by:

Location (if virtual, please indicate):

Tone (e.g., collegial, intense):

Attendees:

Was the official receptive to your message(s)?

Were the materials we provided helpful and supportive?

Are there issues or questions that require follow-up? If yes, please explain:

Please share other relevant details from your meeting, including questions asked, topics of greatest interest, receptivity/reaction to your message(s), etc.

Did you discuss next steps, and can we assist you in making plans to follow up?



NEIGHBOURHOOD PHARMACY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

The [Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada](#) (Neighbourhood Pharmacies) advocates for pharmacies' role in caring for Canadians. We represent leading pharmacy organizations, including chain, banner, long-term care, grocery chains, specialty pharmacies, and mass merchandisers with pharmacies. We advance healthcare for Canadians by leveraging close to 11,000 pharmacies, in almost every Canadian community, as integral healthcare hubs. Pharmacies typically have extended hours, offering primary care with convenience and accessibility.

Interested in learning more about how you can be engaged in Neighbourhood Pharmacies? Please contact info@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca.