

COVID-19 Practice Guidance October 15, 2021



Order of the Provincial Health Officer: Hospital and Community (Health Care and Other Services) COVID-19 Vaccination Status Information and Preventative Measures

Please be advised that the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) has posted the [Hospital and Community \(Health Care and Other Services\) COVID-19 Vaccination Status Information and Preventive Measures – October 14th, 2021 Order](#). Registrants working in the following contexts are advised to familiarize themselves with the content of this order:

- Registrants who are employed by a regional health board (authority), the Provincial Health Services Authority, British Columbia Emergency Health Services, the Providence Health Care Society or a provincial mental health facility,
- Registrants who are contracted or funded by a regional health board (authority), the Provincial Health Services Authority, British Columbia Emergency Health Services, the Providence Health Care Society, Ministry of Health or Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, to provide health care or services in a hospital or in the community,
- Registrants employed, contracted or funded by a person contracted or funded by a regional health board (authority), the Provincial Health Services Authority, British Columbia Emergency Health Services, the Providence Health Care Society, Ministry of Health or Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, to provide health care or services in a hospital or in the community.

Registrants who have questions about whether they are impacted by this order should consult with their employer or contract manager.

The order also includes a “notice to health professionals” (Part L) that states:

“TAKE NOTICE that in accordance with further direction from me, health professionals to be determined by me and their staff, not otherwise required to be vaccinated under the *Residential Care COVID-19 Preventive Measures Order* or this Order, will be required to be vaccinated by a date to be determined by me, in order to provide health care or services in the Province.”

The College's initial review of the order is that, in summary, it applies to individuals employed by, or who provide care in, the public health care system, and not to the majority of private providers at this time. However, the "notice to health professionals" signals the Provincial Health Officer's intention, at a future date, to broaden the order to a larger group of health professionals, including those who (like many occupational therapists) are self-employed or who work for a private employer.¹

The College continues to follow this issue closely and will continue to provide updates to registrants as new information becomes available.

College position on PHO orders and vaccination

The College fully supports the vaccination efforts of the province – for occupational therapists and the public. These are important measures needed to help protect British Columbians, including those who continue to be vulnerable to severe illness and death from COVID-19, even if they are vaccinated. The public needs to have confidence that when they receive health care from a health professional, they are not putting their health at risk.

We recognize that the vast majority of registrants have taken their responsibility to help eliminate COVID-19 in our communities seriously by getting vaccinated and diligently following COVID-19 prevention practices at work, including but not limited to completing point of care risk assessments and following appropriate infection prevention and control practices such as staying home when unwell, wearing a mask, maintaining physical distancing wherever possible, practicing good hand hygiene, and sanitizing high touch surfaces.

We continue to encourage all registrants to get fully vaccinated: this is the best way to protect clients/patients from harm and preserve our ability to safely deliver health services. When you get vaccinated, you are not only protecting yourself against COVID-19, but also everyone around you.

Be Calm, Be Kind, Be Safe.

¹ Disclaimer: COTBC does not provide legal advice, and this notice should not be read as such.