

Bulletin #130: COVID-19 Information

March 18, 2021



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COVID-19 Bulletin

Reminder to continue to practice hand hygiene

Now that New Brunswick has moved into Yellow Phase, we felt it a good opportunity to remind employees and physicians that hand hygiene is still required upon entrance to Horizon facilities.

Science has progressed considerably since the days of Dr. Ignaz Semmelweis and we know hand hygiene is one of the most important tools in infection prevention and control.

Hand hygiene is not optional, and all Horizon employees and physicians are required to sanitize their hands upon entry to a Horizon facility.

We recognize that many of you take the time to sanitize your hands and we appreciate your efforts to keep yourself, your colleagues, and your patients safe and healthy.

Self screening reminder

We want to remind all employees and physicians of the importance of remaining familiar with the screening questions.

The questions and signage for employees and physicians can be accessed [here](#).

Remember:

- Employees and physicians are required to self screen prior to leaving home for their shift.
- Once at the facility, employees and physicians must swipe their ID badge.
- Employees and physicians who leave the facility for any reason (break, meal period, to smoke, or interfacility travel) will be required to be actively re-screened upon their return.

Employee Health is available daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. to answer any questions or concerns – please call 1-833-978-2580

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and leave a voicemail and your call will be returned within two hours.

Compensation for travel related to COVID-19 vaccination

As was communicated to employees and physicians on March 12, 2021, Horizon reviewed its current practice related to travel compensation for employees who obtain the COVID-19 vaccination.

Employees who are **working** on the date of their vaccination appointment are entitled to mileage if they must travel to another location (that is outside of their home facility's community, i.e. Sussex to Saint John) to obtain their COVID-19 vaccination.

Employees who are **not working** on the date of their vaccination appointment are entitled to compensation for one hour while on site to obtain their vaccine and recover. This is paid at straight time only and cannot be banked.

Employees who are **not working** on the date of their vaccination appointment are also entitled to mileage if they must travel to a vaccination location that is (a) not their home facility; and (b) is located further from their home than their home facility.

Mileage is calculated based on the distance between the employee's home facility and the location of the vaccination clinic.



GNB complex medical conditions – information for providers

As part of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, patients aged 16 and over who are part of a defined list of complex medical conditions are eligible for early vaccination.

Physicians, along with regional health authorities, specialty clinics, regional public health and vaccinators, can assist these patients by directing them to the online booking tool for RHA organized clinics, and identifying / assisting those that may need navigation support.

Once the online scheduler goes live this week, appointments can be scheduled as early as the end of March. Certain specialty clinics, such as dialysis, may choose to offer a vaccination program directly through their clinics; if this is an option you wish to consider, please discuss and coordinate with your RHA.

There will be no formal requirement for patients to have an endorsement / approval from a health care professional.

They will be asked to sign a statement attesting to the fact that they meet the eligibility criteria for early vaccine, and as such as based on an 'honour system', which is also being employed in other provinces and countries.

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Health care professionals may also, based on clinical judgment and an assessment of patient needs, refer certain other patients for early COVID-19 vaccine on an as needed basis, including but not limited to:

- severe and profound intellectual/developmental disability
- severe mental illness (schizophrenia, Bipolar, Severe Functional impairment)

If you have identified a patient who falls in these categories, or have specific patients you feel warrant priority status, you may direct or assist them to register for vaccination in the complex medical conditions group.

The vaccine roll-out plan is ambitious and looks to meet the needs of several vulnerable populations. Your assistance in communicating with patients regarding vaccine eligibility is invaluable in helping to reach as many New Brunswickers in as short a time as possible.

More information, including a list of conditions, and a Q&A on the COVID-19 Vaccination Plan is available [here](#).

[GNB update](#)

When available, the GNB news release can be accessed [here](#).

