

**INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL COVID-19
COMMITTEE**

**Bulletin #176a - COVID-19 - ID-IPC - Interim COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing
Guidelines for DSPs - Oct 14 2021**

**COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Guidance:
Interim COVID-19 Vaccination / Testing Guidelines for Designated Support Persons
Effective Oct. 18 to Nov. 19, 2021**

**Designated Support Persons (DSPs) for eligible inpatients and outpatients will be
required to be fully vaccinated by Nov.19, 2021.**

A DSP is an active partner-in-care who provides physical and emotional support to patients or clients and are different from a general or social visitor.

This deferred implementation date will provide unvaccinated DSPs an opportunity to become fully vaccinated. These measures are required for the safety of our vulnerable patients / clients, employees, and physicians.

From Monday, Oct.18 until Nov. 19, please follow the [Interim DSP COVID-19 Vaccination / Testing Guidelines](#) (also on Page 3 of this document) for Inpatient and Outpatient / Emergency Department.

These guidelines require all DSPs to be fully vaccinated and show proof of vaccination. DSPs must pass screening prior to entering a Horizon facility.

If the DSP is not fully vaccinated, the eligible patient will be asked to appoint an alternate DSP who is fully vaccinated. In circumstances where an alternate fully vaccinated DSP is not available, COVID-19 testing requirements will be implemented as outlined in the [Interim DSP COVID-19 Vaccination / Testing Guidelines](#).

Unvaccinated DSPs are encouraged to book a vaccination appointment. Information can be found on Horizon's vaccination clinic [webpage](#) or by calling 1-833-437-1424.

The [Interim DSP COVID-19 Vaccination / Testing Guidelines](#) identifies inpatient and outpatient populations eligible for a DSP, number of permitted designated DSPs, vaccination requirements, exceptions and the management of these exceptions through COVID-19 testing requirements, and a quick reference table.

For further information about the program, please refer to the [Provincial Regional Health Authority DSP Guiding Principles](#) and [Horizon DSP Operational Plan](#).

Please visit the [IPC Resources COVID-19 Skyline Page](#) for COVID-19 information.



**INTERIM COVID-19 VACCINATION/TESTING GUIDELINES
FOR DESIGNATED SUPPORT PERSONS (DSPs)
EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 18 TO NOVEMBER 19, 2021**

1. DSP for hospitalized patients greater than 14 days:

- DSP must be fully vaccinated
- If DSP is not fully vaccinated, exceptions can be made if no other DSP (alternate fully vaccinated DSP) is available.
 - Exceptions: DSPs who are not fully vaccinated must have a negative PCR COVID-19 test completed no more than 72hrs prior to visit, and then agree to have a test at day 5 and day 10. If visits continue to occur must have PCR COVID-19 test twice per week. Visits will be allowed to continue between testing.
 - For this population, no isolation precautions will be required, however, DSPs must self-monitor for symptoms, practice frequent hand hygiene and comply with continuous masking.

2. DSP for “Current Seven” and Other Patient Populations (End of Life/Palliative Care, Medically Assisted Death, Critical Care (includes patients in critical care state on other units (ex. Post op, Oncology, Trauma), Pediatrics/Pediatric Psychiatry, Neonatal, Women in Labour, Post Partum, and Other Patients with Cognitive /Communication Impairments (cognitive impairment leading to agitation and inability to console; communication impairment which affects care)

- DSP must be fully vaccinated
- If DSPs is not fully vaccinated, exceptions can be made if no other DSP (alternate fully vaccinated DSP) is available.
 - Exceptions: DSPs must have a negative COVID-19 test requested on day 1 (scheduled at earliest/first possible appointment). DSP will provide the healthcare team with test date and agree to have a test at day 5 and day 10. If visits continue to occur must have PCR COVID-19 test twice per week. Visits will be allowed to continue between testing.
 - For this population, no isolation precautions will be required, however, DSPs must self-monitor for symptoms, practice frequent hand hygiene and comply with continuous masking.

3. DSP from outside the extended Atlantic provinces:

- DSP with travel risk factors will be managed in accordance with the IPC Visitation Guidance (General and Compassionate) During COVID-19 Orange Phase document. Post 14 days, if visits continue, the vaccination requirement for DSPs outlined above will be followed.
- Under exceptional circumstances, such as imminent death, when the clinical scenario is such that test results will not be available within an acceptable timeframe, a one-time rapid test using the GeneXpert platform can be requested and obtained through the Emergency Department.

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4. DSPs (Support persons) for Outpatient/ Ambulatory Care/ Emergency Department

- ONE support person permitted ONLY for patients requiring physical or emotional support or assistance with decision making or communication. This person must be fully vaccinated.
- DSP must be fully vaccinated.
- If DSP is not fully vaccinated, exceptions can be made if no other DSP (alternate fully vaccinated DSP) is available.
 - Exception: pediatric patients or patients with special needs, Emergency Department visits

5. DSPs (Support persons) for Recurring Outpatient/Ambulatory Care Visits (oncology, dialysis, dressing changes, obstetrics visits (clinic visit or Ultrasound exams)

- DSP must be fully vaccinated
- If DSP is not fully vaccinated, exceptions can be made if no other DSP (alternate fully vaccinated DSP) is available.
 - Exceptions: DSPs must have a negative COVID-19 test requested on day 1 (scheduled at earliest/first possible appointment). DSP will provide the healthcare team with test date and agree to have a test at day 5 and day 10. If visits continue to occur must have PCR COVID-19 test twice per week. Visits will be allowed to continue between testing.
 - Intermittent (regularly scheduled) visits, DSP (Support person) must have a negative PCR COVID-19 test completed no more than 72hrs prior to visit.
 - For this population, no isolation precautions will be required, however, DSPs must self-monitor for symptoms, practice frequent hand hygiene and comply with continuous masking.

6. Revision to the number of DSPs permitted in Orange/Red Phase for Women in Labour

During Orange Phase:

Women in Labour: 2 DSPs present with the patient. A Doula or a second DSP may be present if fully vaccinated and if physical space permits.

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Overall processes in the [RHA DSP Guidelines](#) and Horizon [DSP Operational Plan](#) are to be followed. The Interim DSP Guidelines provide an overview of the number of DSPs in modified orange and red, exceptions for non-vaccinated DSPs and required IPC education for eligible inpatients and outpatients.

Guiding Principles

- DSPs must pass screening prior to entry.
- **DSPs must be fully vaccinated¹ with an approved vaccine and are at least 14 days post 2nd dose.**
- **If DSP is not fully vaccinated, the patient is to appoint an alternate DSP who is fully vaccinated.** If no alternate fully vaccinated DSP is available, **exceptions are outlined below.**
- DSPs must self-monitor for symptoms, practice frequent hand hygiene and comply with continuous masking.
- If DSP is from outside of Atlantic provinces, follow the [IPC Visitation Guidance \(General and Compassionate\)](#)
 - Under exceptional circumstances, if the clinical scenario is such that test results will not be available within an acceptable timeframe, a one-time rapid test using the GeneXpert platform can be requested through an Assessment Centre or the Emergency Department (after-hours and if death is imminent)

Inpatient DSPs

Eligible Patient Populations	# of DSPs	Process for Exceptions	Type of Required Education
Patient Hospitalized greater than 14 days	Up to 2 DSPs, one present at a time	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a negative PCR COVID-19 test taken not less than 72 hours from time of visit 2. AND agree to be tested on day 5 and 10. If visits continue to occur, must have PCR COVID-19 test twice a week. 3. Results are to be shown to and validated by the healthcare providers. 4. No isolation precautions are required. 5. Visits will be allowed to continue between testing. 	Online
Medically assisted death	Up to 10 designated with 1 DSP at a time for the preprocedure phase. 2 DSPs and a Spiritual and Religious Care Provider (if requested) can be present during the procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DSPs MUST have a PCR COVID-19 test appointment booked and provide date to healthcare provider 2. No isolation precautions are required. <p>Spiritual and Religious Care Provider An unvaccinated Spiritual and Religious Care Provider will be permitted to visit an end of life patient, as per the Compassionate Visitation guidelines.</p>	Just in Time from Healthcare providers

¹ New Brunswick accepts any COVID-19 vaccine accepted by the Government of Canada. Currently, this includes 2 doses of the vaccines manufactured by Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD (Can be any combination of vaccines approved by the Government of Canada) or 1 dose of the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine. Note: Recommendation for vaccinating those with COVID-19 vaccines not authorized by Health Canada for those staying in New Brunswick to live, work or study include 1 or 2 doses of a non-Health Canada vaccine with one dose of a mRNA vaccine (Pfizer/Moderna) administered 28 days after the last dose of the non-Health Canada vaccine.

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Eligible Patient Populations	# of DSPs	Process for Exceptions	Type of Required Education
<p>Women in Labour</p>	<p>Up to 2 DSPs, 2 DSPs present at a time – when physical space permits One of the DSPs can be a Doula or a fully vaccinated 2nd DSP</p> <p><i>Primary DSP must be fully vaccinated but can be managed under exceptions</i></p> <p><i>Doula must be fully vaccinated</i></p> <p><i>Secondary DSP must be fully vaccinated</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First Visit (Day 1) - MUST have a PCR COVID-19 test appointment booked and provide date to healthcare provider. 2. Additional visits - agree to have PCR COVID-19 test at day 5 and 10. If visits continue to occur, must have PCR COVID-19 test twice a week. 3. Testing results must be validated by the healthcare provider. 4. No isolation precautions are required. 5. Visits will be allowed to continue between testing 	<p>Just in Time from Healthcare providers</p>
<p>Neonatal</p>	<p>Up to 2 DSPs, 2 DSPs present at a time – when physical space permits</p>	<p>Same as above</p>	
<p>End of Life /Palliative Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 10 designated with 1 DSP at a time. • When patient is actively dying (PPS of 20% or less), 2 DSPs can be present at a time. One (1) pastoral/ spiritual care provider (if requested), per palliative care patient is permitted to visit to provide comfort to the patient, family and loved ones during the end of life period. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First Visit (Day 1) - MUST have a PCR COVID-19 test appointment booked and provide date to healthcare provider. 2. Additional visits - agree to have PCR COVID-19 test at day 5 and 10. If visits continue to occur, must have PCR COVID-19 test twice a week. 3. Testing results must be validated by the healthcare provider. 4. No isolation precautions are required. 5. Visits will be allowed to continue between testing <p>DSP - Spiritual and Religious Care Provider An unvaccinated Spiritual and Religious Care Provider will be permitted to visit an end of life patient, as per the Compassionate Visitation guidelines.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Care patients on any patient care unit • Postpartum (OBS) • Pediatrics/ Pediatric Psychiatry • Patients with Cognitive/ Communication impairments, which affects care 	<p>Up to 2 DSPs, 1 present a time</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First Visit (Day 1) - MUST have a PCR COVID-19 test appointment booked and provide date to healthcare provider. 2. Additional visits - agree to have PCR COVID-19 test at day 5 and 10. If visits continue to occur, must have PCR COVID-19 test twice a week. 3. Testing results must be validated by the healthcare provider. 4. No isolation precautions are required. 5. Visits will be allowed to continue between testing 	

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Outpatient/Ambulatory Care or Emergency Department Patient DSPs (Support Persons)

Eligible Patient Populations	# of DSPs	Exceptions	Type of Required Education
<p>One Time Appointments/ Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/guardian of pediatric patient • DSP of patient with special needs • Emergency Department visits 	1 DSP	<p>This patient population require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical support • Emotional support • Assistance with decision making and/or Communication <p>No further actions or isolation precautions required</p>	Just In Time education from Healthcare providers
<p>Reoccurring Ambulatory/Outpatient appointments</p> <p>Patients who require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical support • Emotional support • Assistance with decision making and/or Communication 	1 DSP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First Visit (Day 1) - MUST have a PCR COVID-19 test appointment booked and provide date to healthcare provider 2. Additional visits - agree to have PCR COVID-19 test at day 5 and 10. 3. Results validated by the healthcare provider. 4. Visits will be allowed to continue between testing. 	Just In Time education from Healthcare providers
<p>Intermittent (regularly scheduled) visits</p> <p>Patients who require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical support • Emotional support • Assistance with decision making and/or Communication 	1 DSP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First Visit (Day 1) - MUST have a PCR COVID-19 test appointment booked and provide date to healthcare provider 2. DSP (Support person) must have a negative PCR COVID-19 test completed no more than 72hrs prior to visit. 3. Results validated by the healthcare provider. 4. No isolation precautions 	Just In Time education from Healthcare providers