

Ministry of Health

Office of Chief Medical Officer of
Health, Public Health
393 University Avenue, 21st Floor
Toronto ON M5G 2M2

Tel.: 416 212-3831
Fax: 416 325-8412

Ministère de la Santé

Bureau du médecin hygiéniste en
chef, santé publique
393 avenue University, 21^e étage
Toronto ON M5G 2M2

Tél. : 416 212-3831
Télec. : 416 325-8412

June 8th, 2021

MEMORANDUM

TO: Health Care Providers

RE: Using Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to complete a mRNA vaccine series.

As we move forward in our COVID-19 vaccine rollout and accelerate the administration of second doses across the province, I want to share additional direction about options for completing an mRNA, two dose vaccine series.

It continues to be crucial for all individuals to complete their vaccine series with two doses of COVID-19 vaccines to receive the best level of protection. Data from clinical trials and real world studies clearly demonstrate the enhanced protection of a complete vaccine series to prevent the transmission of COVID-19, including the new delta variant (B.1.617.2). It is not the first time in the pandemic that we find ourselves in a race against this virus.

While it continues to be preferable to provide the same vaccine product to complete an mRNA vaccine series; if there is operational or logistic necessity, including the availability of vaccine products, a 'mixed mRNA model' is acceptable. This is consistent with [recommendations](#) recently provided by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization and the practices of many jurisdictions. Provision of a second dose of vaccine should not be significantly delayed in order to complete a vaccine series using the same mRNA product, unless clinically indicated.

There are several studies underway that are formally evaluating the efficacy and immune response associated with a mixed dose approach compared with that from two doses of the same product. The Ministry will continue to follow these studies and share findings when available.

Where a different product is used to complete the vaccine series, the appropriate minimal dose interval should be determined from the product monograph of the vaccine used for the first dose (21 days where Pfizer-BioNTech is a first dose and 28 days where a Moderna COVID-19 vaccine is a first dose). More information about timing of second doses for

different population groups can be found on the ministry's website in a [quick reference](#) guide.

Please review your programs in light of this direction and make appropriate updates to your plans, including necessary changes to the medical directives supporting your vaccine programs. I would future ask for your help in communicating this information to your patients, to support them in making an informed decision.

We have a strong surveillance program in Ontario evaluating for any safety signals associated a COVID-19 vaccination. Inclusion of Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFIs) reporting in your protocols is of continued importance. More [information](#) about AEFIs events and reporting is available on Public Health Ontario's website.

Offering a full vaccine series to everyone in Ontario is our mission this summer – including to those who need additional support, counseling or adapted access. It has been a very long and hard 16 months of response to COVID-19. While we continue to respond every day, this vaccination program marks our transition to recovery. I want to again thank you and your teams for your continued effort and dedication to the people of Ontario.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

David C. Williams, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Chief Medical Officer of Health

c: Helen Angus, Deputy Minister of Health
Dr Dirk Huyer, Clinical Guidance and Surveillance, Workstream Vaccine Distribution Task Force
Alison Blair, Associate Deputy Minister
Patrick Dicerni, Assistant Deputy Minister