

December 21, 2020

A message from the Provincial Network on Developmental Services

Dear Colleagues:

This is to inform you that a COVID-19 Vaccine working group has been established on behalf of the Provincial Network. The workgroup is a non-governmental entity and has no authority to implement or direct Vaccine delivery. The Provincial Network on Developmental Services has created a COVID-19 Vaccine Working Group to support the government's vaccine efforts, particularly for the Developmental Services Sector / Congregate Settings.

The working group, having met with MCCSS (ADM, Rupert Gordon and Christine Kuepfer), identified the following areas of focus. They include:

Education- The translation and communication of information to all stakeholders is often quicker and can be more effective, if provided by the sector to the sector, than if it goes through Ministry channels. MCCSS would be available to assist but it is best owned by sector.

Consent - Ensuring the sector is ready with knowledge of who and how to process and obtain appropriate consent and the information required to assist with informed consent for those who are providing and overseeing vaccine delivery.

Prioritization – Advocating to ensure we are known by those with influence to understand the sectors needs regarding prioritization. Identification of political, bureaucratic and other sector advocates that can influence prioritization (e.g. Vaccine Taskforce, Minister of Health, and Solicitor General). This may need to be considered at all levels as National direction is often followed provincially and local public health and delivery providers need to understand the sector.

Distribution – Profiling best practices and highlighting tangible examples of distribution processes that have worked in the past. Identify the assets or resources we have in the sector that can assist and some of the challenges we can foresee based on what we know about the vaccine now (i.e. getting people to vaccine sites vs vaccine coming to them). Developing some ideas for the “Last Mile”.

Human Resources – Looking at protocols and identifying concerns that may impact employees, volunteers, and families. Including issues of cross-provincial employees, agency staff... The workgroup will highlight issues and recognizes that most items must be dealt with in the context of agency labour relations and policy, but some issues may be common across the sector.



We recognize that this is a fluid environment led through a health command and control model as such the PN working group does not expect to be actively engaged in distribution decisions and technical process, but we felt we could advocate and prepare and clear the path to support vaccine delivery. The work group is interested in reflecting the diversity of the sector including northern, suburban and first nation's communities and will be reaching out for support on workgroups.

In regards to timeline the general consensus is that the logistical and supply chain delivery may not see massive access in the next 30 days and may be more like the next 90 days but given the pace of change and the expanding list of suppliers it is necessary to have determined resources and challenges outlined early.

Next Steps: Over the coming days and weeks members of the PN COVID-19 Vaccine Working Group will develop and share educational resources (for supported individuals, staff, and families/SDM's) and an effective consent process – while continuing to advocate for priority access to the vaccine.

Regards,

Michelle Brooks , Chair of PN

Lorrie Heffernan and Bryan Keshen
PN COVID-19 Vaccine Working Group, CO-Chairs

The Provincial Network membership includes: Community Living Ontario, Community Networks of Specialized Care of Ontario (CNSC-O), Christian Horizons, Developmental Services Ontario (DSO), Faith and Culture Inclusion Network , Great Lakes Society (GLS), Ontario Association on Developmental Disabilities(OADD), Ontario Agencies Supporting Individuals with Special Needs (OASIS), Provincial Executive Directors Group (PEDG), the Provincial Network Human Resources Committee and Toronto Developmental Services Alliance (TDSA)

