

Ministry of Health

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December 13, 2023

MEMORANDUM

TO: Medical Officers of Health and Associate Medical Officers of Health

FROM: Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health

RE: Mpox (monkeypox) Update and Key Messages

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the importance of mpox full-series vaccination, ongoing risk, and to provide key messages for Public Health Units to use for local outreach and engagement.

I would like to thank you all for the amazing work to date. Over 52,771 doses among 39,372 people have been administered, with a quarter of those individuals receiving both doses.

As of October 20, 2023, the World Health Organization (WHO) deemed the overall risk for men who have sex with men and sex workers for mpox infection as moderate. Globally, mpox transmission continues at low levels in the European Region and in the Region of the Americas, with greater transmission observed in the Western Pacific and South-East Asia regions. In Ontario, there have been 31 mpox cases reported between January 1 and November 13, 2023, of which 80.6% were reported by Toronto Public Health. The provincial monthly average of mpox cases reported in 2023 was 3.1. In the last 6 months, there has also been detection of human mpox virus in wastewater samples in Toronto supporting laboratory data that suggests ongoing low levels of community transmission.

On December 7, 2023, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a [Health Advisory](#) for increased mpox activity, and the novel identification of sexual transmission of the more severe Clade 1 mpox virus, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. A subsequent public health alert through the Public Health Agency of Canada was issued on December 11, 2023, including a recommendation for continued vigilance among the healthcare community for mpox-like symptoms in individuals at higher risk of exposure and relevant travel history.

Several National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs), including the UK [Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation \(JCVI\)](#) and the US [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\)](#) have recommended ongoing routine vaccination against mpox for individuals who are at high risk for mpox infection.

In light of these recommendations, the current Ontario and global epidemiology, and in anticipation of advice from that National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI), OCMOH is reiterating the need to continue to ensure that Imvamune® is made available to individuals at risk for mpox infection. Additionally, for individuals who received one dose of Imvamune®, it is strongly encouraged that they receive a second dose for optimal protection.

Vaccine supply continues to be available and PHUs are encouraged to order vaccine as needed to ensure eligible groups can continue to receive both first and second doses of Imvamune® as pre-exposure and post-exposure prophylaxis. PHUs should continue submitting their Imvamune orders via the PHU Imvamune Vaccine Order Form. Any questions about the ordering and delivery of Imvamune should be forwarded to the vaccinesupplyandlogistics@ontario.ca inbox.

Special release doses may be coordinated for Imvamune® to health care providers. A bulk release model is permissible where facilities can order in small quantities based on their practice size/number of immunizers. However, PHUs are still responsible for reporting vaccine usage to the ministry in these situations to ensure that all doses are accounted for to the federal government.

Health units must have a procedure in place to carefully monitor special release vaccines to ensure that:

- Vaccines only are provided to eligible individuals;
- Vaccine wastage is minimized; and
- Individual level immunization data is recorded in the Digital Health Immunization Repository (Panorama) for doses received from a health care provider, with express consent from the individual being vaccinated, or their substitute decision maker.

TPOXX antivirals should continue to be ordered by clinicians by contacting the Vaccine Policy and Programs Branch at vaccinesupplyandlogistics@ontario.ca.

For information on Mpox visit [Mpox \(formerly known as monkeypox\) | Public Health Ontario](#) and

[MPOX Virus \(gov.on.ca\)](http://gov.on.ca) (please note these pages are being updated and included with information on other vaccine preventable diseases).

Should you or your staff have any questions please contact the vaccine program at VacPro@ontario.ca.

Thank you for your continued dedication and commitment to help protect the health and well-being of Ontarians through vaccine programming.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kieran Michael Moore, MD, CCFP(EM), FCFP, MPH, DTM&H, FRCPC, FCAHS
Chief Medical Officer of Health and Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Health

Cc.

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