



## Deciding whether to provide the COVID-19 vaccine in your practice

**Final Version Notice:** This is the final version of this guide, reflecting the resources and information available up to April 19, 2023. The guide will not be updated beyond this date.

### Before you decide if you want to offer the COVID-19 vaccine, consider:

- ☐ **Is my practice able to take on the additional workload?**  
Planning and administering COVID-19 vaccines requires more time and administrative support than flu shots due to COVax (the mandatory system required to document all COVID-19 vaccines) and vaccine hesitancy conversations.
  
- ☐ **Is it financially sustainable for me to vaccinate?**  
Physicians offering COVID-19 vaccination in clinics not organized by a hospital or public health unit should bill using the G-codes designated for COVID-19 vaccination. For a sole visit, the total fee is **\$18.60 per patient**. For vaccination with a visit for another unrelated insured service, the fee is **\$13.00 + visit fee**. Note that these fees may only be billed for patients who are insured under OHIP.

Use the table below to sketch out the revenue and costs for your approach.

#### Calculation of income from vaccination:

Sole visit	Your Clinic	Example
a) # of patients per hour		10
b) # of vaccinators*		2
c) Per patient rate (assumes sole visit): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G593 (COVID-19 vaccine) + G700 (basic fee-per-visit premium), or</li> <li>• G593 (COVID-19 vaccine) + Q593 (sole visit premium COVID-19 PEM)</li> </ul>	\$18.60	\$18.60
d) Costs associated with vaccination (for example, bringing in extra clinical or administrative staff to assist with vaccination, COVax training for staff, medical supplies, etc.)		\$100
<b>Total income (a x b x c) - d</b>		<b>\$272/ hour*</b>

\* COVID-19 vaccination can be delegated. If you choose to delegate vaccination (for example, to a nurse), you could continue to see other patients in parallel. This would add to your total hourly income; however, you should factor in the cost of extra staff members.

For more on COVID-19 billing codes, refer to the [OMA COVID-19 billing codes summary](#).

- ☐ **Do I have an existing relationship with my local Public Health Unit?**  
It is helpful if you already have an existing relationship with your local Public Health Unit because they both allocate vaccine doses and set up primary care clinics in COVax. (Note that only practices designated by their local Public Health Unit may provide COVID-19 vaccines.)

- ☐ **Do I have the administrative capacity to support patient outreach?**  
For example, sending a mass email inviting patients to contact the office to book or individually calling eligible patients to invite them in. Conversations with patients can become counselling sessions related to vaccine hesitancy that take longer than originally anticipated.
- ☐ **Do I have the administrative capacity to support COVax?**  
COVax is a secure, cloud-based set of digital tools to support the clinical administration and inventory management of COVID-19 vaccines. All COVID-19 vaccinations must be recorded in COVax. COVax is available real-time, anywhere; all you need is a browser. There is a significant amount of work required up front to prepare to use COVax.
- ☐ **Do I have the refrigeration capacity to store the vaccine?**  
All Health Canada approved COVID-19 vaccines require refrigeration between 2 to 8 degrees Celsius.
- ☐ **Do I have the physical space to support post-vaccination observation periods?**  
The post-vaccination observation period is at least 15 minutes and longer for patients with known or suspected allergies (e.g. 30 minutes). A reduced observation of 5-15 minutes for booster dose(s) may be considered [if specific conditions are met](#), such as the patient's experience with previous COVID-19 vaccine doses. Strongly consider physical distancing during high-risk periods (i.e. when hospitalizations, ICU admissions and community transmission are high or increasing), with chairs spaced out in the waiting area.

If you decide not to offer COVID-19 vaccines in your practice, you can still support vaccination in the following ways:

- ✓ **Promote vaccination**
  - Counsel patients about COVID-19 vaccination; note that this is a [billable activity](#)
- ✓ **Address vaccine hesitancy**
  - Refer to the OMA's [vaccine hesitancy toolkit](#), as well as [resources on COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy](#)
- ✓ **Refer patients to where they can receive the vaccine**
  - Children under two years of age can get their COVID-19 vaccine from a physician, nurse practitioner or local public health unit; they cannot get it at a pharmacy
  - Patients can [book online](#) through the provincial booking service or over the phone through the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900