

Re: Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccine Program this fall

Dear Long-Term Care Home Administrator,

This fall, Ontario's Ministry of Health launched a high-risk targeted Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccine program for individuals 60 years and older residing in long-term care homes, Elder Care Lodges and retirement homes licensed to provide dementia care.

RSV is a major cause of lower respiratory illness, particularly in older adults, affecting the lungs and airways. Older adults and those with underlying health conditions such as asthma, chronic heart or lung disease and weakened immune systems can be at risk of severe illness with RSV. Older adults, particularly those with existing comorbid conditions, are more susceptible to severe disease and have an increased risk of RSV-related hospitalization and mortality.

Arexvy (manufactured by GSK) is a single-dose RSV vaccine that is safe and effective and is now approved and available in Canada for individuals 60 and older to prevent lower respiratory tract disease caused by RSV. All Ontario residents 60 and over in long-term care homes are eligible for a publicly funded RSV vaccine.

Ordering RSV Vaccine

York Region Public Health will manage the local distribution of the RSV Arexvy vaccine to long-term care homes and eligible retirement homes in York Region. You may order the vaccine for your residents using the attached vaccine order form. Please include the most current five business days of refrigeration temperature logs along with your order form.

Each long-term care home is responsible for arranging the self-administration of the RSV vaccine for all residents 60 and older.

The [Ontario Immunization Advisory Committee \(OIAC\)](#) recommends that co-administration of Arexvy with other vaccines is **not** recommended at this time as a precaution. It is recommended that Arexvy be administered at least 14 days before or after other vaccines, such as COVID-19 and influenza.

The Ontario Ministry of Health is finalizing an immunization consent form for residents or a substitute decision-maker to complete before immunization. The immunization consent form will be sent to you once it is available.

Please read the attached Ontario Ministry of Health RSV fact sheet for important information about the RSV vaccine, including storage and handling requirements and how to prepare Arexvy before administration. If you have any questions or concerns about the RSV Arexvy vaccine, please contact us at vaccineinventory@york.ca.

York Region Public Health appreciates all your tremendous work to ensure all eligible residents 60 years of age and older are protected against lower respiratory tract disease caused by RSV this respiratory season.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Erdman', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Sarah Erdman, MD, MSc, FRCPC
Associate Medical Officer of Health
York Region Public Health

Attachments – RSV vaccine order form
RSV fact sheet (Ministry of Health)