

YORK REGION PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE TO PHARMACISTS

As of July 4, 2019

ADDING EXPERTISE: INTRODUCING THE PUBLIC HEALTH PHARMACIST

As medication experts, pharmacists play an important role in community health through evidence-based dispensing practices as well as providing guidance to health care professionals and the public on important drug-related issues. As part of our commitment to innovation and high quality services, York Region Public Health is the first public health unit in Ontario to employ a Pharmacist full time.

The new Public Health Pharmacist, Christine Tabisola, provides expertise in the correct storage, handling and distribution of vaccines and other pharmaceutical products as well as an understanding of how to help your pharmacy improve patient outcomes.

RIFAMPIN SHORTAGE IN ONTARIO

The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (the Ministry) is currently experiencing a supply shortage of Rifampin 150 mg/300 mg, medications used to treat active and latent Tuberculosis (TB). As a result, the supply of Rifampin in Ontario is currently limited. Health care providers are asked to prioritize use of rifampin for treatment of active TB disease instead of latent TB infection during this shortage.

The Ministry is implementing a contingency plan to manage the current supply of Rifampin. Ordering will be restricted and quantities will be limited until additional supply is available. Orders to replenish publicly funded Rifampin supplies will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

The Ministry is seeking alternative products from outside of Canada to augment the supply and looking into alternative treatment options to help manage cases of active TB disease until the end of this disruption.

York Region Public Health will keep you informed of any changes to Rifampin supply and distribution. Please maintain your publicly funded TB medication stocks separately from your privately funded stock, to enable public health to have a good understanding of the amount of publicly funded TB medications currently available in our community. Understanding supply locations will support our ability to redistribute Rifampin, should the need arise.

In addition, we ask that you prioritize dispensing of Rifampin supply by using older stock first to prevent expiration of medication. This includes filling prescriptions using 2 x 150 mg of Rifampin instead of 300 mg, when the 150 mg is expected to expire sooner.

NEW PROCEDURE: TB MEDICATION ORDERING AND PICK UP

To order TB medications:

Fax the completed TB drug order form to the Vaccine Inventory team at 905-830-0578.

To pick up TB medications:

TB medications will now need to be picked up from a nearby York Region Public Health office, and will no longer be delivered directly to your pharmacy.

Once the order is received and prepared, your pharmacy will be notified when the order is ready to be picked up. The TB medications will be available at one of the following York Region Public Health locations during regular business days and hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.):

- 4261 Highway 7 East, Markham
- 50 High Tech Road, Richmond Hill (2nd floor)
- 520 Cane Parkway, Newmarket

This new process for obtaining your TB medications takes effect immediately. When placing your order for TB medications, please indicate the pick-up location most convenient for you.

To submit your TB drug reimbursement:

Reimbursement documentation can be submitted in the same manner as before by faxing the completed form to the TB Control team at 905-895-5450 or 1-844-209-4389.

CONTACT YORK REGION PUBLIC HEALTH

York Region Public Health can help! You can contact our **TB Control** team for TB-related questions via phone at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 76000 or via email at tb@york.ca. You can contact our **Vaccine Inventory** team for questions about medication ordering via phone at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 74033 or via email at vaccineinventory@york.ca.