

**Ministry of Health**

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April 19, 2024

**Re: Immunization Recommendations for Children Previously Immunized with Oral Poliovirus Vaccine (OPV)**

Dear Primary Care Provider,

This memorandum is to inform you of **updated provincial polio vaccine recommendations for children previously immunized internationally with oral poliovirus vaccine (OPV)**. These recommendations align with recently updated guidance from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization as stated in the Canadian Immunization Guide (CIG).

In April 2016, the World Health Organization coordinated a global switch for countries who administer the oral polio vaccine –replacing the trivalent oral polio vaccine (tOPV) with the bivalent OPV (bOPV), which contains poliovirus serotypes 1 and 3 but not serotype 2. For this reason, healthcare providers should presume that children vaccinated internationally with documented dose(s) of OPV administered on or after April 1, 2016, received bOPV. **To ensure protection against all three poliovirus types, these children should complete a polio vaccine series with an inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) or an IPV-containing vaccine using an age-appropriate schedule.**

Since OPV has not been used in Canada since 1996, this recommendation only affects those vaccinated internationally (e.g., newcomers). For these patients:

- Review available immunization records
- For any recorded doses of OPV administered **April 1, 2016 or later**, presume these doses are bivalent OPV (bOPV) (i.e., missing polio serotype 2) and consider these doses invalid
- Immunize with an age-appropriate series of IPV or IPV-containing vaccine, which contains all three poliovirus types

Those with inadequate immunization records or those lacking documented polio immunization should be considered unimmunized and started on an age-appropriate immunization schedule with an IPV-containing vaccine as per the catch up schedule in the Q&A for Immunizers and Public Health Ontario's [Summary of Immunization Recommendations for Children Previously Immunized with Oral Poliovirus Vaccine](#)

This is also an opportunity to review the complete immunization record or status of your patients and offer vaccines per the [Publicly Funded Immunization Schedules for Ontario June 2022](#))

Yours truly,



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

#### Attachments

1. Public Health Ontario's '**At a Glance**': [Summary of Immunization Recommendations for Children Previously Immunized with Oral Poliovirus Vaccine](#)
2. [Qs &As for Immunizers; Recommendations for Children Previously Immunized with Oral Poliovirus Vaccine](#)

c: Dr. Daniel Warshafsky, Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health