

Policy 2.5 - Medical Directive Required for the Provision of Immunization Services (including the administration of immunizing agents and the management of adverse events following immunization)

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide standards to Public Health nurses and community health nurses¹ and their employers concerning the requirements for medical directives to administer vaccine through the publicly funded New Brunswick Immunization Program.

Preamble: Providing immunization is within the scope of practice for registered nurses in New Brunswick. Nurses are guided by professional practice standards and are at all times accountable for their practice and compliance with relevant standards.

Providing safe immunization requires that the provider follows the National Guidelines for Immunization Practice as outlined in the *Canadian Immunization Guide*.

Regional Medical Officers of Health have a mandate to provide the medical direction necessary for the administration of vaccine/biologics and the management of immediate events following the administration of vaccine within the regional health authority Public Health setting.

Additionally, upon request from the administrative authority responsible for the provision of Public Health immunization programs in First Nations communities, the Regional Medical Officer of Health may provide a medical directive for the provision of services in that community.

Policy: Nurses working in Public Health settings under the regional health authorities and, where applicable, nurses working in First Nations' community health programs, will provide immunization services under the medical direction of the Regional Medical Officer of Health.

Procedures:

1. A medical directive for immunization services will be provided for Public Health nurses and community health nurses following consultation among the parties involved; namely, the Regional Medical Officer of Health; the administrative authority for immunization service delivery in each organization; and the nurses affected by the directive. The nurses may be represented by the immunization co-ordinator or designate. Refer to Appendix 4.1.1 *Medical Directive for the Provision of Immunization Services*, including vaccine administration and the management of adverse events following immunization.
2. Public Health nurses employed by the regional health authorities and community health nurses employed by a First Nations health service will ensure that they have met conditions outlined in the medical directive.
3. For Public Health nurses employed by the regional health authorities, the director of public health programs (or designate) will ensure that all conditions of the medical directive are met.
4. For community health nurses employed by a First Nations health service, the administrative authority responsible for the provision of immunization services will ensure that all conditions of the medical directive are met.
5. The medical directive will be reviewed by all parties and updated each fiscal year.
6. A copy of the medical directive will be available to staff in all sites where the medical directive is applied. Refer to Appendix 4.1.1 *Medical Directive for the Provision of Immunization Services*.

¹ The term "community health nurses" refers to those nurses working in First Nations communities.