

December 21, 2020

Dr. Matthew Tunis
Executive Secretary
National Advisory Committee on Immunization

Delivered by email: matthew.tunis@canada.ca.

RE: Priority COVID-19 Vaccinations for Infection Prevention and Control Professionals

Dear Dr. Tunis,

As the first COVID-19 vaccine begins to arrive and be administered in Canada, I am writing to you on behalf of Infection Prevention and Control Canada (IPAC Canada) to emphasize the importance of ensuring that infection prevention and control professionals (ICPs) are prioritized in receiving these vaccines. I am also writing to express our support for the *Guidance on the prioritization of initial doses of COVID-19 vaccine(s)* recently published by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization.

Infection prevention and control professionals have been working on the front lines in the fight against COVID-19 throughout the pandemic. They work to provide infection prevention and control expertise in health care settings and businesses, and to the public-at-large. ICPs are often working in settings where risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 is higher. The pandemic has demonstrated the crucial role and expertise of ICPs in preserving the health and safety of our communities. This role will remain critical as we continue to combat the pandemic, vaccinate Canadians, and work to recover. Ensuring that ICPs are prioritized in receiving the COVID-19 vaccine(s) will allow them to safely and effectively continue to do their work as Canada moves to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the coming months, with the rollout of vaccines and the maintenance of infection prevention and control measures.

We are encouraged by the *Guidance on the prioritization of initial doses of COVID-19 vaccine(s)* recently published by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI), indicating that healthcare workers providing frontline care to patients should be prioritized in the first phase of vaccinations due to their differential exposure to SARS-CoV-2 and because they are needed to protect healthcare capacity. We also support the NACI recommendation that all other health care workers who did not receive the vaccine in the initial rollout be prioritized in the second phase of vaccinations. It is our position that all jurisdictions in Canada should adhere to these recommendations in administering COVID-19 vaccine(s) throughout the coming months.

Finally, IPAC Canada would like to thank you and your team for your diligence and commitment to ensuring that COVID-19 vaccines are administered effectively and safely across Canada. As you continue to refine and make these recommendations as more information about COVID-19 vaccine(s) becomes available, we urge you and your team to continue to consider the critical role that ICPs play in ensuring the health and safety of our communities during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Catt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barbara Catt RN BScN MEd CIC
President, IPAC Canada