

Program/Service Information Report

Vaccine Coverage in School-Age Children

To: Board of Health

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Key Points

- A high level of immunization coverage is important to prevent outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases.
- Most immunization coverage rates for school-age children in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (WDG) are above the provincial averages.
- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) depends on parents and healthcare providers to report immunizations in order to maintain up-to-date data.
- WDGPH remains engaged in community immunization outreach efforts to increase immunization coverage locally.

Program Requirements

Compliance with OPHS and Accountability Indicators:

In compliance

Not in compliance. If not in compliance, provide additional information about the variance and how it will be addressed.

Highlights

Immunization coverage refers to the proportion of a population that is appropriately immunized at a specific point in time.¹ High immunization coverage is important for preventing outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases.¹ To maintain quality vaccine coverage data, WDGPH assesses the records of all children in schools and licensed childcare centres on an annual basis. Ontario's *Immunization of School Pupils Act* (ISPA) authorizes WDGPH to maintain a record of immunization for each pupil attending school. In addition, Ontario's *Child Care and Early Years Act* (CCEYA) requires daycare operators to maintain immunization records for children enrolled in child care programs.

Most childhood vaccines in WDG are administered by community healthcare providers. The WDGPH Vaccine Preventable Disease (VPD) program offers all Grade 7 students free vaccines for Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), Hepatitis B (HBV) and Meningococcal (Men-ACYW-135) vaccine in the school setting, as directed by the Ministry. WDGPH also offers annual catch-up clinics in high schools for any vaccines that are mandated for school attendance under the ISPA. Immunizations can also be accessed through WDGPH Clinical Services by appointment.

WDGPH depends on parents and healthcare providers to report immunizations to Public Health in order to maintain up-to-date data. Public Health Ontario (PHO) offers an annual report of vaccine coverage data, in Ontario, that is specific to each public health unit.¹ The *Immunization Coverage Report for School Pupils in Ontario: 2017-18 School Year* can be accessed on the PHO website, along with historical reports.

According to the most recent report from PHO, immunization coverage rates for school-age children in the WDGPH jurisdiction remain above provincial averages, with the exception of HPV, in the 2017-18 school year.¹ The WDGPH specific HPV vaccine coverage rate for the 2018-19 school year has increased to 61.4%, with official comparisons to provincial data to be presented in the 2020 PHO report.

Table 1. Immunization coverage (%) among children 7 years old (2017-18 school year)

	Measles	Mumps	Rubella	Diphtheria	Tetanus	Polio	Pertussis	Hib	Pneumococcal	MenC	Varicella
Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health	94.5	94.5	97.2	93.6	93.6	94.2	93.6	84.6	76.9	95.9	91.5
Ontario	87.6	87.4	96.4	85.9	85.9	86.3	85.8	82.4	74.1	94.7	82.6

Table 2. Immunization coverage (%) among children 17 years old (2017-18 school year)

	Measles	Mumps	Rubella	Diphtheria	Tetanus	Polio	Pertussis
Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health	96.6	96.3	97.8	82.2	82.2	95.0	79.3
Ontario	95.3	95.0	97.1	76.8	76.9	93.5	72.1

Table 3. Immunization coverage (%) for school-based immunization programs, children 12 years old (2017-18 school year)

	Meningococcal (ACYW-135)	HBV	HPV
Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health	85.8	70.1	58.4
Ontario	82.4	69.2	59.9

Vaccine Coverage Improvement Initiatives

WDGPH will continue to maintain and support effective immunization programs such as the annual catch-up clinics in high schools. Community immunization outreach efforts include annual vaccine education for community healthcare providers, telephone support, and exploring viable solutions to immunization barriers. In a direct effort to improve immunization coverage for the vaccines provided in the school setting, WDGPH has implemented a quality improvement project in partnership with the University of Toronto and The Hospital for Sick Children, targeting pain management and vaccine hesitancy. A report on this initiative will be available after the completion of the 2019-20 school year.

References:

1. Public health Ontario. Immunization Coverage.
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/health-topics/immunization/vaccine-coverage>

Related Reports

BH.01.OCT0318.R29 – Immunization Coverage Rates for School-Aged Children