

mcp newsletter

October 21, 2022

22-16

TO: ALL FEE-FOR-SERVICE PHYSICIANS

RE: COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION FEE CODES

Further to MCP newsletter 21-03 ("TEMPORARY COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION FEE CODES") published in May 2021, the Department of Health and Community Services (HCS) wishes to advise fee-for-service physicians that COVID-19 immunization fee codes will continue to be available until further notice.

Physicians administering COVID-19 vaccines should review provincial guidance and other important resources available at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/vaccine/resources-for-health-care-professionals/>. Any updates relevant to physicians providing COVID-19 immunization will be posted on this site.

Rates and billing requirements for physicians providing COVID-19 immunization are unchanged from May 2021. However, given that COVID-19 and influenza vaccinations can be administered to the same patient at the same time, additional clarification is offered to physicians providing these immunizations in the same patient encounter. This billing guidance mirrors billing requirements for influenza immunization posted last week. For further guidance on billing influenza immunizations, please see <https://www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/files/TEMPORARY-INFLUENZA-IMMUNIZATION-FEE-CODE-pdf.pdf>.

54661	COVID-19 immunization; visit fee and/or fee code 54000 not payable in addition	17.16
54662	COVID-19 immunization add-on to office visit	Add 10.00

Billing Requirements for COVID-19 Immunization:

- 1) Billing rules when a visit is for **immunization(s) only**:
 - a) visit for **COVID-19 immunization only** – claim one unit of fee code 54661;
 - b) visit for **both COVID-19 immunization AND influenza immunization** – claim one unit of 54661 (COVID-19 immunization) and one unit of 54656 ("each additional injection");

- Please be advised that these two vaccines cannot be given simultaneously to children six months to under five years of age. This group must have an interval of two weeks between immunizations.
 - c) visit for **both COVID-19 immunization AND pneumococcal polysaccharide 23 (Pneu-P-23) immunization of target population** – claim one unit of 54661 and one unit of 54656.
 - d) For further clarity, only one immunization fee code can be claimed per visit regardless of the number of immunizations provided in that visit. If the COVID-19 immunization is provided alone or at the same time as other immunizations, the COVID-19 immunization code (54661) should be billed. All others should be billed as 54656 (“each additional injection”).
- 2) Billing rules for a **visit for assessment and immunization(s)**:
- a) visit for **assessment AND COVID-19 immunization** – When a patient presents to a physician’s office for a visit unrelated to the COVID-19 vaccination and also receives a COVID-19 vaccine during the office visit, the appropriate office visit code may be billed by the physician as long as preamble requirements for that visit are met. In this case, fee code 54662 is also payable for the administration of the COVID-19 vaccine at \$10.00.
 - b) visit for **assessment, and both COVID-19 immunization AND influenza immunization** – claim the applicable visit fee as above in 2) a) and one unit of fee code 54662 (COVID-19 immunization add-on to office visit at \$10.00);
 - Please be advised that these two vaccines cannot be given simultaneously to children six months to under five years of age. This group must have an interval of two weeks between immunizations.
 - c) visit for **assessment, and both COVID-19 immunization AND pneumococcal polysaccharide 23 (Pneu-P-23) immunization of target population** – claim the applicable visit fee as described in 2) a) and one unit of fee code 54662 (COVID-19 immunization add-on to office visit at \$10.00).
 - d) For further clarity, only one “add-on” code (54656 or 54662) can be claimed per visit regardless of the number of immunizations provided in that visit. Fee codes 54662 (COVID-19 immunization add-on to office visit) and 54656 (each additional injection) cannot be billed together.
- 3) As per MCP Medical Payment Schedule Preamble sections 5.2, 5.6.1(b) and 5.6.1(d), the billing physician must be physically present at the site where the COVID-19 immunization(s) is administered.

- 4) Premiums cannot be billed with COVID-19 immunization fee codes. However, fee code 139 (“Add on fee for patients seen in scheduled after hours clinics”) remains billable with fee codes 101 through 136.

Documentation Requirements for Physicians Providing COVID-19 Immunization:

1. Each time a COVID-19 vaccination is administered, it **must** be documented.

For Med Access users: completion of the **COVID-19 Immunization Response** template available within Med Access is the only acceptable method of documenting COVID-19 immunization.

For non-Med Access users: an EMR “light” solution has been created by the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information (NLCHI). Education on how to use this solution will be made available and support will be provided by NLCHI. Please email info@edocsnl.ca for further information.

If a physician is unable to use EMR or EMR light, paper documentation can be used. COVID-19 Immunization Consent Forms can be found at [Resources for Health Care Professionals - COVID-19 Vaccine \(gov.nl.ca\)](https://gov.nl.ca/resources-for-health-care-professionals-covid-19-vaccine) as fillable and non-fillable pdfs. If you encounter difficulty in accessing the fillable pdf, you can download the file and view it in Adobe Reader.

Completed COVID-19 Immunization Consent Forms should be batched and submitted twice weekly to the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information at:

COVID-19 Vaccination Forms
70 O’Leary Avenue
St. John’s, NL A1B 2C7

Consent Forms may be transferred to NLCHI via courier service at no charge or alternatively, by in-person drop-off. The custodian of personal health information must ensure that this transfer of information is in compliance with the **Personal Health Information Act**.

To arrange courier service at no cost to the physician, please contact Susan Peach at susan.peach@nlchi.nl.ca or (709) 752-6131.

2. If a visit for assessment is billed with the COVID-19 immunization, the record of service for that visit must meet the minimum requirements for the applicable visit billed as

stated in the MCP Medical Payment Schedule preamble. Documentation of the COVID-19 immunization is also required as above in 1.

3. If the COVID-19 immunization is provided at the same time as an influenza immunization, both immunizations must be documented separately.

Contacting patients to remind them of the availability of COVID-19 immunization is not viewed by MCP as solicitation.

Questions relating to the content of this newsletter should be directed to Dr. Colleen Crowther, Assistant Medical Director at (709) 758-1557 or by email at ColleenCrowther@gov.nl.ca.