



September 13, 2022

Dear Family Member,

**The Regional
Municipality
of Durham**

Social Services
Department

John Rankin
Acting Director
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Bivalent COVID-19 Vaccine

On September 1, 2022, Health Canada authorized an adapted version of the Moderna Spikevax COVID-19 vaccine. This vaccine (known as a "bivalent" vaccine) targets the original SARS-CoV-2 virus from 2019 and the Omicron (BA.1) variant and is authorized for use as a booster dose in individuals 18 years of age or older.

This is the first bivalent COVID-19 vaccine authorized in Canada and marks a milestone in Canada's response to COVID-19. After a thorough and independent scientific review of the evidence, Health Canada has determined that the bivalent Moderna Spikevax booster is safe and effective. Clinical trial results showed that a booster dose of the bivalent Moderna Spikevax vaccine triggers a strong immune response against both Omicron (BA.1) and the original SARS-CoV-2 virus strain. It was also found to generate a good immune response against the Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants and is expected to extend the durability of protection.

This adapted vaccine has a similar safety profile to the previously approved Moderna Spikevax booster, with the same mild adverse reactions that resolve quickly.

Vaccination continues to be one of the most effective ways to protect families, communities, and ourselves against COVID-19. Evidence indicates that the vaccines used in Canada are very effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. Keeping COVID-19 vaccinations up to date, including getting booster doses as recommended, will help protect an individual against serious illness and other complications of COVID-19 infection.

Based on the recommendation of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and health experts, all Regional LTC homes will begin offering booster doses of the bivalent COVID-19 vaccine to residents, providing them with an extra layer of protection against Omicron and its sub-variants, as we face the anticipated surge in cases during the fall and winter.

Required Consent to receive bivalent COVID-19 vaccine

If your family member meets all the criteria to receive the Moderna Spikevax bivalent COVID-19 vaccine, you will be contacted by one of the home's staff members to obtain your verbal consent as the resident's legal substitute decision maker.

In this email, we have included a sample copy of the consent form. It is imperative that you review the documentation and provide the home with verbal consent or refusal on behalf of the resident when you are contacted.

We would like to thank you for your continued support and for completing the necessary consents. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to the staff member when you are contacted.

John Rankin