

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Nova Scotia Health recommends additional infection control measures for [Covid-19 PPE: At a Glance](#). The Skills Checklist is a self-assessment tool for healthcare professionals (HCPs) who administer immunizations. Prior to using the Skills Checklist for Vaccine Administration, complete the required Immunization Course, based on your practice setting: [COVID-19 Hub Community Immunization Clinic Resources](#). EPIC for Public Health and Primary Health Care and NS Health Immunization Course for other settings, available on LMS at <https://elearning.nshealth.ca>

To complete it, review the competency areas below and the clinical skills, techniques and procedures out-lined for each area. Score yourself in the Self-Assessment column. If you check 'Needs to Improve', you indicate further study, practice, or change is needed. When you check 'Meets or Exceeds', you indicate you believe you are performing at the expected level of competence, or higher.

Preceptors: Use the Skills Checklist to clarify responsibilities and expectations for HCPs who administer vaccines. Give the HCP the opportunity to score themselves in advance. Next, observe their

performance as they administer vaccines to several clients, patients, or residents, and score in the 'Preceptor Review' columns. If improvement is needed, meet with them to develop a 'Plan of Action' (see bottom of page 3) to help them achieve the level of competence you expect; circle desired actions or write in others.

Provide your completed Skills Checklist for Vaccine Administration to your Health Service Manager or delegate prior to independent practice.

Competency	Clinical Skills, Techniques, and Procedures	Self-Assessment		Preceptor Review		
		Needs to Improve	Meets or Exceeds	Needs to Improve	Meets or Exceeds	Plan of Action
Safety and Preparation for Immunization	1. Review the clinical practice guidelines found on the COVID-19 HUB to inform the administration and preparation of the Vaccine/immunizing agent as per product monograph. Clinical Practice Guideline - Preparation and Administration of COVID-19 Vaccines , Clinical Practice Guideline: Preparing / Preloading Covid-19 Vaccine in Vaccine Preparation Station and Clinical Practice Guideline - Pooling of Residual Volume from Two Vaccine Vials					
	2. Prepares the emergency response protocol as per NSHA CD-PH-020 Initial Management of Anaphylaxis Following Immunization. Initial Management of Anaphylaxis Following Immunization Flow Chart					
	3. Ensures Anaphylaxis Kit is within reach, checks expiry.					
	4. Reviews guidance to prevent and report any needle-stick injury as per NSHA-AD-OHS-005 Sharps Safety					
	5. Assembles all safety supplies including sharps container and hand hygiene products.					
	6. Demonstrates knowledge of proper vaccine handling, i.e., maintains at recommended temperature, keeps temperature logs, protects live vaccines from light, and reports any cold chain breach to Public Health.					
Education and Assessment	1. Welcomes client/patient/resident/family and establishes rapport.					
	2. Obtains Informed Consent (consults relevant local policies on consent).					
	3. Performs Point of Care Risk Assessment and chooses appropriate PPE to minimize risk.					
	4. Explains what vaccines will be given and which type(s) of injection(s) will be done.					
	5. Answers questions and accommodates language or literacy barriers and special needs of the client/patient/resident/SDM/family.					
	6. Completes a health assessment and immunization history and screens for indications and contraindications.					
	7. Does not immunize Client if there are contraindications and advises to consult a primary care provider for follow-up.					
	8. Provides education on common side effects, how to manage at home, and when to contact their provider or seek care.					

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	9. In collaboration with Client/SDM/family determine the need for psychosocial preparation, procedural support such as distraction, pain management, as well as the need for an assistant to support the safe completion of the procedure while minimizing the risk of pain and distress					
	10. Review comfort measures and aftercare instructions including requirement for observation for 15 minutes post-Immunization.					
Vaccine Preparation	1. Performs proper hand hygiene prior to preparing vaccine.					
	2. Reviews temperature of Vaccine to ensure it is within proper range when removing from refrigerator or Vaccine cooler. Maintains daily record of temperature storage for Vaccines and other biological products (see Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit).					
	3. Checks vial expiration date. Double-checks vial label and contents prior to drawing up. Inspects vaccine for unusual appearance, and expiry date.					
	4. Prepares Vaccine in designated clean medication areas or clinic station immediately prior to administration. Vaccine should only be drawn up immediately before administration. Pre-drawing of Vaccine is not an approved practice, can impact the viability of the product to provide protection, and increases risk of administration errors.					
	5. Selects the correct needle size for IM and Subcutaneous injection based on Client age and/or weight, injection site, and recommended injection technique as per product monograph.					
	6. Maintains aseptic technique throughout, including cleaning the rubber septum (stopper) of the vial with alcohol prior to piercing it.					
	7. Prepares Vaccine vial as per direction from product monograph (i.e. reconstitute and mix using the diluent supplied).					
	8. Prepares a new sterile syringe and sterile needle for each injection.					
	9. Checks the expiration date on the equipment (syringes and needles) if present.					
	10. Labels each filled syringe or uses labeled tray/tents to keep them identified. If administering multiple vaccines, clearly differentiates Vaccines from each other for safety.					
Administering Immunizations	1. Re-check the Authorized Prescriber's order or Care Directive against the vial and prepared syringes.					
	2. Use proper hand hygiene with every Client .					
	3. Demonstrates knowledge of appropriate route of injection for each vaccine as per the product monograph.					
	4. Position Client or provide guidance to parents as appropriate for positioning of children.					
	5. Correctly identifies the injection site and anatomic landmark for specific IM or S/C injection.					
	6. Preps the site with an alcohol wipe, using a circular motion from the center to a 2" to 3" circle. Allows alcohol to dry.					
	7. Controls the limb with the non-dominant hand; holds the needle an inch from the skin and inserts it quickly at the appropriate angle (90° for IM or 45° for S/C).					
	8. Injects vaccine using steady pressure; withdraws needle at angle of insertion.					
	9. Applies gentle pressure to injection site for several seconds using gauze pad, or bandaid.					
	10. Uses strategies to reduce anxiety and pain associated with injections.					
	11. Properly disposes of needle, syringe, and vaccine vials in sharps container.					

