

# IMMUNIZATION OF STUDENTS

## Background

Communicable disease control is part of the school health program provided to the District by Vancouver Coastal Health. The immunization program is aimed at maintaining adequate levels of protection in the school population against major vaccine preventable diseases such as diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, hepatitis B, rubella, measles and mumps. Activities include health education, immunization, case finding, exclusion of infected persons, referral for diagnosis and treatment, and surveillance of individuals and groups at risk.

## Procedures

1. The school immunization program is enhanced by the co-operation and participation of all those involved, including the school medical health officer, community health nurses, parents, and school administrators.
2. Responsibilities of School Medical Officer
  - 2.1. The *School Act*, Sec. 91 (1), specifies that: "A school medical officer may and when required by the Minister of Health must examine or cause examinations to be made as to the general health of students of the schools in the school district." The school medical health officer is also responsible for communicable disease control and exclusions of students for medical reasons.
3. Responsibilities of Community Health Nurse (CHN)
  - 3.1. As a delegate of the school medical officer, the CHN is employed by Vancouver Coastal Health. Responsibilities include screening immunization history of enrolled students, scheduling immunization clinics in consultation with the Principal, and inoculating students in a safe environment according to professional practice standards.
  - 3.2. The CHN is responsible for the health education of students regarding communicable disease control and the life-long role of immunization. The CHN is also responsible for case finding, outbreak control, referral for diagnosis and treatment, and surveillance of individuals and groups at risk
4. Responsibilities of Principal
  - 4.1. The Principal is to ensure that the communicable disease control program is facilitated in the following ways:
    - 4.1.1. Immunization information and consent forms (provided by Vancouver Coastal Health) are distributed to parents when students enroll in the school. Completed forms are collected by school staff for the school community health nurse.
    - 4.1.2. School community health nurses have access to students enrolled in selected grades in order that health education and health services can be delivered.
    - 4.1.3. Immunization clinics are supported through co-operation of school staff and the provision of a safe environment.

## 5. Responsibilities of Parent

- 5.1. As the primary caregiver of a student, parents are required to provide immunization history when a student registers in school for the first time. Vancouver Coastal Health's consent policy includes informed consent for mature minors under the Infants Act. Parental consent, written or verbal, is required for students under the age of 14.

## 6. Responsibilities of Student

- 6.1. As the recipient of immunizations, students are responsible for participating in health education sessions, returning signed consents to the school, and attending vaccination clinics in an orderly manner. For students who are deemed mature and able to give consent, parental consent will be sought once. If there is no response, then the student can give personal informed consent, under the Infants Act, provided the criteria of best interest is met to the satisfaction of the Vancouver Coastal Health employee.

Reference: Sections 2, 3, 4, 7, 20, 22, 23, 65, 74.1, 75, 75.1, 85, 91 School Act  
Family Relations Act  
Infants Act  
Visiting Forces Act

Adopted: October 18, 1982

Revised: August 1, 1990; May 1996; January 1999; February 2007; September 24, 2018