



## For Immediate Release

### **Alberta to cover flu shot specifically formulated for seniors in 2021-2022 season**

*One of few jurisdictions to keep pace with national recommendations*

**TORONTO, March 5, 2021** - CanAge, Canada's national seniors' advocacy organization, applauds the Government of Alberta for better protecting older adults against potentially deadly influenza. The province now joins Ontario and Prince Edward Island in meeting the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommendation that seniors get the vaccine that is specifically formulated for them.

"Alberta has shown real leadership by protecting seniors against influenza. We congratulate them for meeting NACI standards in this area. Now the issue of ease of access to the vaccinations will come into play," according to Laura Tamblyn Watts, CanAge President and CEO. "We encourage Alberta to provide the seniors-specific influenza vaccine not just at doctors' offices, but also broadly across health and community settings such as pharmacies and public health offices with no user charge."

Starting in the 2021-2022 flu season, seniors in Alberta will be eligible for the quadrivalent vaccine (QIV-HD). Albertans 6 months of age to 64 years of age will continue to access the regular dose of the flu shot.

Except for Ontario, PEI, and now Alberta, vaccines specifically-formulated for seniors have only been made available on a limited basis to those living in long term care homes, or in some provinces, not at all.

This comes on the heels of a landmark CanAge [Vaccine Report Card](#), issued last week, which called out Alberta for *not* covering vaccines for older adults. The report, which awarded Alberta a grade of D-, noted that access to, funding of, an awareness of vaccines for seniors was lacking.

"Vaccines are the saviours of our public health system - and yet prior to COVID-19 they have not been prioritized or effectively planned for in terms of budgeting or uptake for older adults. Alberta's overall Report Card grade would improve even more if it fully funded the shingles vaccine to meet NACI standards as well," says Tamblyn Watts "but this is an important step in the right direction for seniors' care. Vaccines save lives - but only if we get them into the arms of those who need the protection most".

Once details of the new vaccination plan are rolled out, CanAge confirms it will be able to issue an adjusted "Spotlight Report on Adult Vaccinations in Alberta" later this year.

CanAge is Canada's national seniors' advocacy organization that works to advance the rights and well-being of Canadians as we age. We work collaboratively with corporations, nonprofits,

the media, and governments to amplify seniors' issues, influence policy and effect change. To learn more, visit [www.canage.ca/](http://www.canage.ca/).

For more information or to book an interview:

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Biography and headshot of Laura Tamblyn Watts available at [www.canage.ca/media](http://www.canage.ca/media)