

PHARMACY ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA (PANS) POSITION STATEMENT

INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATIONS FOR PHARMACISTS

September 2014ⁱ

PANS recognizes that influenza is a serious illness that affects certain populations disproportionately. Vulnerable groups, such as infants, seniors, pregnant women and those with chronic illnesses, are at higher risk of experiencing complications from influenza. PANS encourages all Nova Scotians, including health care workers, to get vaccinated. PANS supports annual influenza immunization as the most effective method of preventing influenza and its complications.

It is PANS's position that all pharmacists and pharmacy employees should receive the influenza vaccine annually to protect themselves, their families and those in their care, with the exception of pharmacists and other employees for whom influenza immunization is contraindicated.

PANS recommends that annual influenza immunization of pharmacists and other pharmacy employees be part of a comprehensive workplace and patient-safety strategy. PANS believes that employee policies that place immunization as a condition of service should be considered if employee influenza immunization coverage levels are not protective of patients, and reasonable efforts have been undertaken with education and enhancing accessibility to immunization.

PANS believes that pharmacists other pharmacy employees must be well-informed of the risks of the disease to themselves, their families and those they care for, as well as of the benefits and risks of immunization. Employers are expected to provide workers with information that is thorough, current and accessible.

PANS urges pharmacy education programs to discuss the science of vaccines, including safety and efficacy, as well as ethical issues surrounding the immunization of pharmacists and other health care workers.

ⁱ This statement has been based upon the statements issued by Doctors Nova Scotia and the Canadian Nurses Association.