

May 27, 2021

Dr. Homer Chin-Nan Tien, OMM, MD, M. Sc., FACS, FRCSC
Chair, COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force

Via Email

Re: Access to the Second Dose of the COVID-19 Vaccine

Dear Dr. Tien:

On behalf of Ontario's more than 10,000 dentists and 34,000 dental staff, the Ontario Dental Association (ODA) would like to commend the Ministry of Health (MOH) for its leadership and progress in vaccinating Ontarians against COVID-19. It is encouraging to read that over 7.4 million¹ cumulative vaccine doses have been administered, and that additional groups are being prioritized so they can access their first dose of the vaccine.

We understand the rationale behind the government's decisions to shorten the time interval for the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine for frontline health-care workers (HCWs) who were previously categorized as "highest priority" as per the [COVID-19: Guidance for Prioritizing Health Care Workers for COVID-19 Vaccination](#). The ODA has [communicated](#) this decision to its members.

The ODA has always acknowledged that while all HCWs should be a priority, some sectors and settings must receive access first. We appreciate that the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force continues to balance the ethical, timely and effective distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine as the pandemic and vaccine supply has evolved.

As the supply of the COVID-19 vaccine continues to increase over the coming weeks, we understand that the MOH will give consideration to allowing additional HCWs to have accelerated access to the second dose, including those HCWs categorized in the "very high priority" grouping. We look forward to seeing community-based dentists and their teams included in the near future. Dentists and their teams provide an essential service to unmasked patients while exposing themselves to risks due to the nature of care, including aerosol generating procedures (AGPs).

Since the beginning of the pandemic, dentists have demonstrated their commitment to providing a safe environment for the delivery of patient care. We trust that the MOH will continue to support and protect Ontarians, including dentists, their staff, and patients.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Dr. Michelle Budd
Chair, ODA Health Policy and Government Relations (HPGR) Advisory Committee

c Ms. Laurel Brazill, MOH Director of Stakeholder Relations

¹ EOC (MOH) Operations Situation Report #433: COVID-19, May 19, 2021