BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

Communicable Diseases and Immunization Service
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Date: **September 24, 2020** **Administrative Circular: 2020:18**

ATTN: Medical Health Officers and Branch Offices
Public Health Nursing Administrators and Assistant Administrators
Holders of Communicable Disease Control Manuals
Directors of Health Protection
Environmental Health Officers and Epidemiologists working on zoonotic diseases

**Re: Update to Communicable Disease Control Manual,
Chapter 1: Communicable Disease Control, Rabies & Chapter 2: Immunization,
Part 4 – Biological Products**

Chapter 1: Communicable Disease Control

Rabies

- Section 4.2 Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (RPEP) has been revised to indicate that unimmunized immunocompetent individuals can be immunized using either an intradermal (ID) or intramuscular (IM) regimen. Serological confirmation of immunity is recommended following completion of the 3-dose ID regimen; a decision tree (Figure 2) outlining the scheduling of serological testing has been included, with a link to the appropriate lab requisition form. A link to the BC Immunization Manual has been included for information on doses and schedules. Content regarding the dilution of RabIg when there are extensive wounds has been revised to direct the healthcare provider to the BC Immunization Manual for information regarding dilution of the specific RabIg product being used.
- Section 4.4 Pre-Exposure Rabies Prophylaxis (PrEP) has been revised to allow for either ID or IM regimen for immunocompetent individuals ≥ 18 years of age, and IM regimen only for immunocompromised individuals, children less than 18 years of age, or those on chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine, or planning to start chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine, within a month of series completion. More details are available in the BC Immunization Manual, Part 4 – Biological Products, Rabies Vaccine for PRE-EXPOSURE Prophylaxis. Additional content has been included regarding serological confirmation of immunity following completion of the ID regimen.
- Appendix D: Rabies Immune Globulin (RabIg) Dosage by Bodyweight has been reformatted and revised to include content for KamRAB™.

- Appendix E: Instructions for the Administration of Rabies Vaccine and Rabies Immune Globulin has been revised to include content for KamRAB™. Links to various sections of the BC Immunization Manual have been included.
- Other minor content revisions have been made throughout the document.

Please remove the following from the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 1, Rabies: Table of Contents & Pages 1-35 dated December 2019

Please add the following to the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 1, Rabies: Table of Contents & Pages 1-37 dated September 2020

Please also remove the following from the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 1, Interim direction for the use of rabies vaccine for post-exposure prophylaxis in BC: Pages 1-2 dated August 9, 2019

Chapter 2: Immunization

Part 4 – Biological Products

Immune Globulins

Human Rabies Immune Globulin (RabIg): Imogam® Rabies Pasteurized

- The Administration content has been revised to indicate that the dose of IMOGAM® Rabies can be diluted with a volume of normal saline equivalent to 1 to 2 times the dose of IMOGAM® Rabies.

Please remove page numbers: 1-3 dated December 2019

Please add page numbers: 1-3 dated September 2020

Rabies Vaccines

Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (Imovax® Rabies and RabAvert®)

- Doses and Schedule section has been revised to indicate that unimmunized immunocompetent individuals can be immunized using either an intradermal (ID) or intramuscular (IM) regimen. Unimmunized immunocompetent individuals should be vaccinated using a 4-dose IM schedule. A 5-dose IM schedule remains the standard for immunocompromised, and those on chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine.
- Administration section has been revised to include information on ID administration of rabies vaccine and the appearance of an elevated wheal ≥5 mm following vaccine administration. A link to Appendix B – Administration of Biological Products has been included for further information on ID administration.

- Serological Testing and Re-Vaccination section has been revised to include direction for serological confirmation of immunity for unimmunized immunocompetent individuals immunized via the ID regimen. A decision tree (Figure 1) outlining the scheduling of serological testing has been included, with a link to the appropriate lab requisition form.
- The product components for RabAvert® have been revised.

Please remove page numbers: 1-4 dated August 2019

Please add page numbers: 1-5 dated September 2020

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (Imovax® Rabies and RabAvert®)

- Doses and Schedule section has been revised to indicate that immunocompetent individuals 18 years of age and older can be immunized using either the intradermal (ID) or intramuscular (IM) regimen. Immunocompromised individuals, children less than 18 years of age, and those on chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine, or planning to start chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine within a month of series completion, should be immunized using the IM regimen. This section has also been revised to include scheduling and dosage information for both ID and IM administration.
- Administration section has been revised to include: information related to the storage of the vaccine when being used for multiple ID doses, the preferred sites for ID administration, and the appearance of an elevated wheal ≥5 mm following ID administration. A link to Appendix B – Administration of Biological Products has been included for further information on ID administration.
- Serological Testing and Booster Doses section has been revised to include direction for serological confirmation of immunity for individuals immunized via the ID regimen. An additional statement has been included indicating that a booster dose should be provided as 1.0 mL IM, if required.
- The product components for RabAvert® have been revised.
- Precautions has been revised to indicate that the ID route should not be used for immunocompromised individuals, children less than 18 years of age or those on chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine, or planning to start chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine within a month of series completion.
- The content under “Special Considerations” regarding the use of the ID route in the event of a rabies vaccine shortage has been removed.

Please remove page numbers: 1-3 dated May 2017

Please add page numbers: 1-3 dated September 2020

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Stephanie Meier, Senior Practice Leader, BCCDC (telephone: 604-707-2577 / email: stephanie.meier@bccdc.ca).

Sincerely,

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