
Improving Immunization Coverage in Newcomer Populations in Manitoba

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Disclosure

- I have no conflicts to report.
- I have no financial relationships with commercial and not-for-profit organizations.

Learning Objectives

- Identify the gaps in immunization coverage between continuous and non-continuous residents.
- Describe initiatives that Manitoba has taken to improve newcomer reporting of immunization records into the provincial immunization registry.

Introduction

- Manitoba has been recording administered immunizations into a registry for decades.
- The Manitoba Immunization Monitoring System (MIMS) was created in 1988 to record and track immunizations of those born on or after January 1, 1980. In 2000, MIMS was expanded to include the immunizations of all Manitobans.
- MIMS was replaced by the Public Health Information Management System (PHIMS) in 2015.
 - PHIMS, a product of Panorama, contains MB's Immunization Registry, which is the provincial electronic public health record that has the capacity to maintain immunization records for Manitobans registered with Manitoba Health.

How Immunization Data is Entered into the Immunization Registry

- Immunizations are entered into the registry in multiple ways:
 1. System Interfaces with PHIMS:
 - Vaccines entered into Physician billing systems and the Pharmacy Drug Program Information Network (DPIN), except for influenza and COVID-19 vaccines are automatically added onto a client's immunization record through an interface to PHIMS.
 2. Direct Entry into PHIMS:
 - Public Health enters all vaccines that they administered directly into PHIMS as well as on behalf of other providers who don't have access to or are not part of an interface with PHIMS.
 - Pharmacies that administer influenza and COVID-19 vaccines enter the data directly onto a client's immunization record in PHIMS.

Gaps in Manitoba's Immunization Coverage Rates

Immunization Coverage

Manitoba reports immunization coverage rates each year for various ages.

[Annual Report of Immunization Surveillance | Epidemiology and Surveillance | Public Health | Health | Province of Manitoba](#)

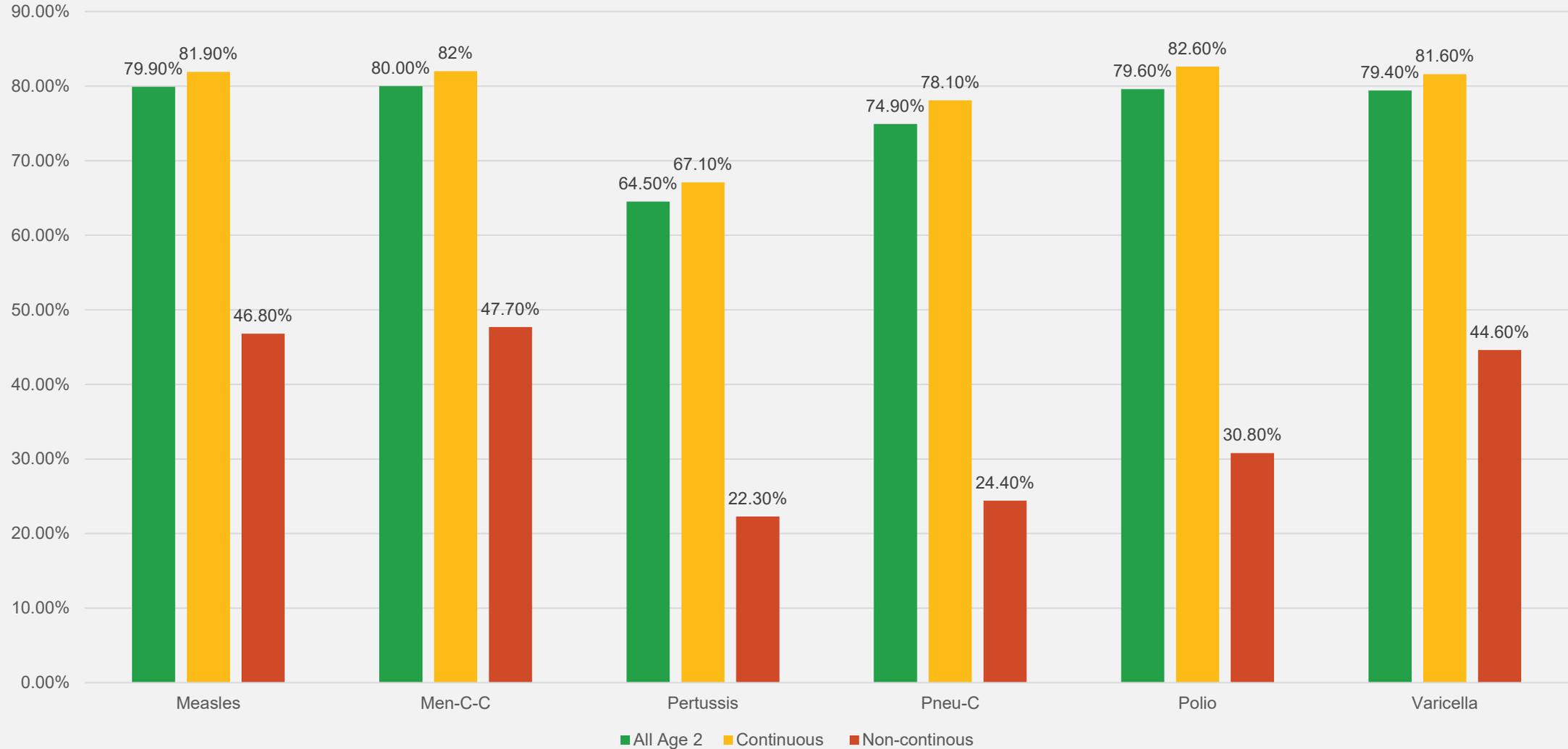
Reported coverage rates include rates for all of Manitoba's population as well as broken down by continuous and non-continuous populations at 1, 2, 7, and 17 years of age.

Residency Status Definitions

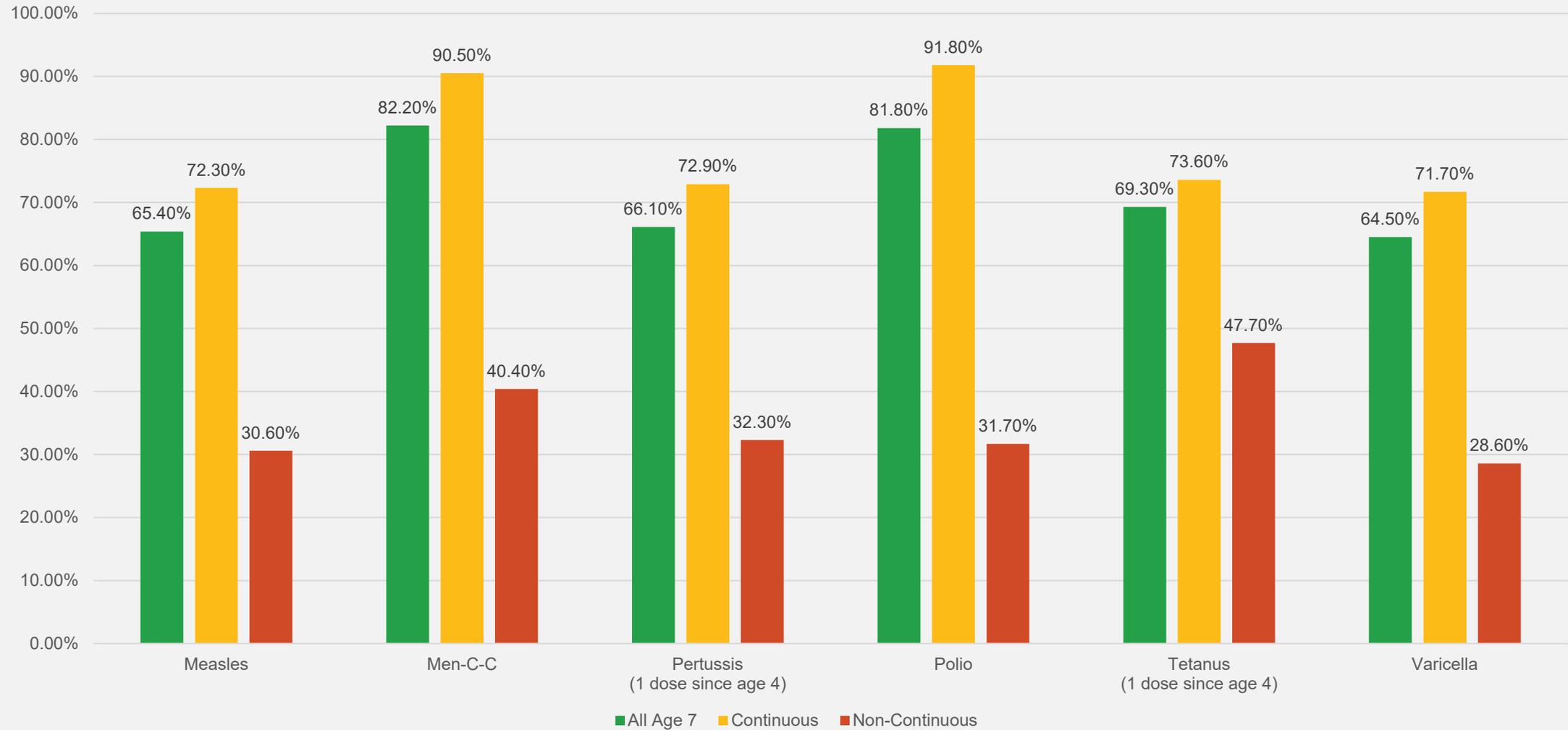
Continuous resident: An individual who has been in Manitoba their whole life (i.e., uninterrupted registration with MB Health).

Non-Continuous resident: An individual who has not been in Manitoba continuously since birth. (This includes those who moved away and returned).

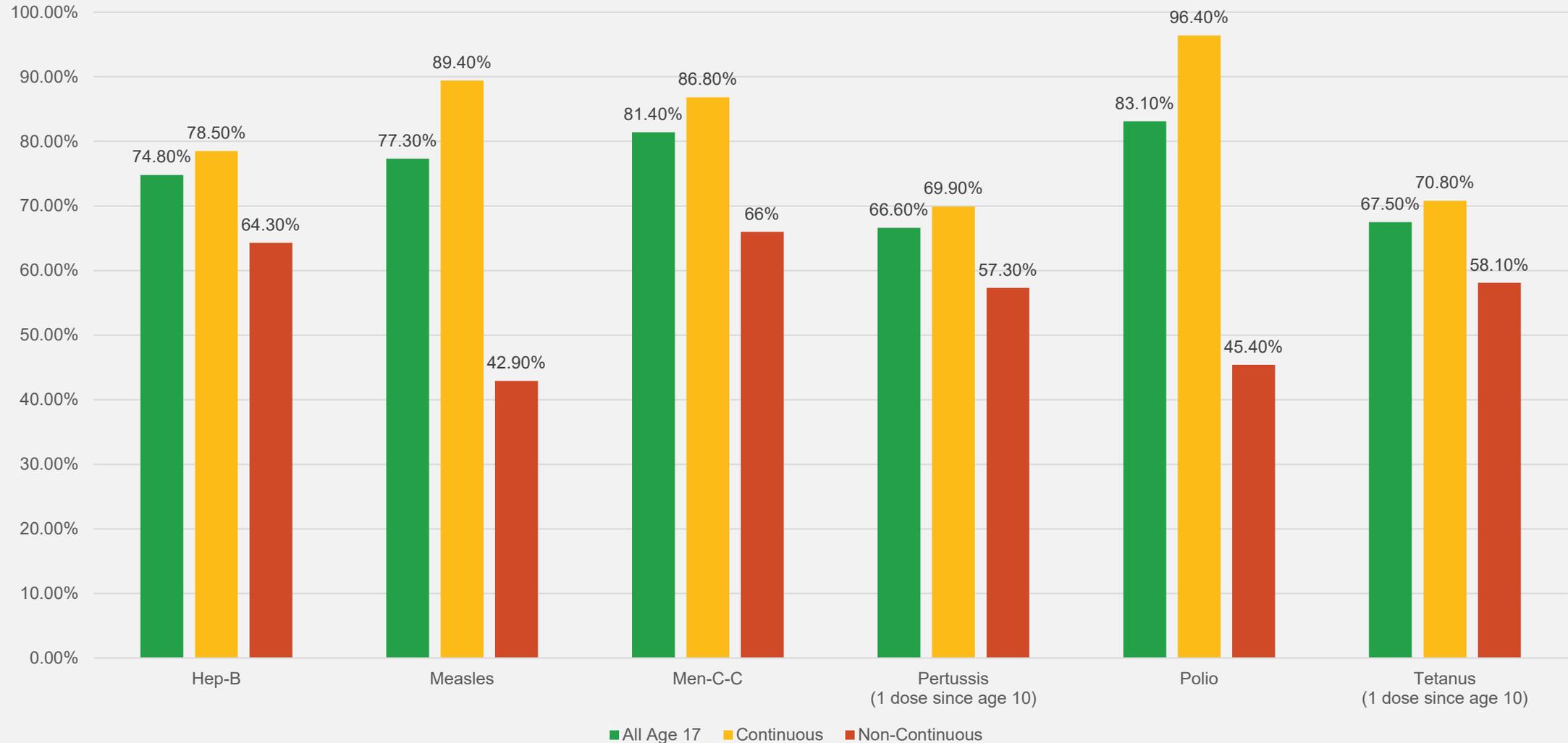
2023 Coverage Rates – 2 years



2023 Coverage Rates - Age 7



2023 Coverage Rates - Age 17



What We Are Seeing



The gap is smaller between continuous and non-continuous immunization coverage as age increases. When non-continuous children have more time to access health care providers and included as part of the school immunization programs, they are able to get immunized, or their immunizations get captured in the immunization registry.



A possible reason for the lower coverage rate of non-continuous residents is that there is limited awareness or ability for the newcomer population to submit immunization records they may have when they arrive in Manitoba.



A survey conducted in 2019 to newcomers through various newcomer organizations found that the majority (86%) had immunizations before they came to Canada and 68% had records. In addition, almost all identified they or their children would get immunizations based on Manitoba's immunization schedule if the vaccines were free and recommended by a health care provider.

Summary of Gaps

- Since Physicians can only bill for those who are registered with Manitoba Health, any publicly funded immunizations that they provide to newcomer populations before they are registered must be reported using manual forms. This could be resulting in under-reporting of vaccines that are being administered.
- As there are limited opportunities for newcomers to report their immunization records that they may have from outside of Manitoba, there could be a discrepancy in the coverage rates for that population. We do not know who may have records or how many of the non-continuous population actually needs to be immunized.

Newcomer Program

Initiated in 2023

Entering Newcomer Records into PHIMS

- In 2023 Manitoba created the [Your Immunization Record Matters](#) page. Through this page a person can submit an electronic [Immunization Update Request Form](#) (eForm) to submit their immunization records that they may have from outside of Manitoba to be added to the Immunization Registry.
 - The immunization records are then uploaded into PHIMS by MB PHIMS Quality Assurance and Data Entry clerks once validated.
- The eForm not only allows the upload of immunization records but also can be used to request a copy of a person's immunization record.
- Manitoba's Quality Assurance (QA) team is currently in the process of updating the eForm, which includes specific requests from newcomer populations to improve efficiency, security and privacy.
- All records entered into PHIMS can be viewed by health care providers who use PHIMS or through electronic medical records (e.g. eChart).

Direct Entry of Newcomer Records

- Health care providers (HCPs) who have access to PHIMS and see newcomer populations can enter immunization data directly into PHIMS once the client has been issued a MB Personal Health Identification Number (PHIN).
 - This is primarily regional public health staff.
 - Translation can be an issue and validation of the records may not be occurring.
 - This was the standard practice before the creation of the QA team during COVID-19 pandemic.

Process for Handling Newcomer Immunization Records – QA Team Process

- Upon receipt of a submission of immunization records, it is thoroughly reviewed to ensure all required documentation and information are provided.
- If the client does not possess a MB PHIN, they are redirected to the appropriate area of Manitoba Health to apply for one. The request is then closed as **non-actionable**. They can resubmit their request when they get their MB PHIN.
- **Required Documentation from Clients:**
 - **Government-issued photo identification** (e.g., passport, driver's license).
 - For children residing within Canada, a health card from their previous province or territory is acceptable.
 - **Original immunization record from outside Manitoba** (non-translated version)
 - Must include the client's full name, date of birth, and country of origin (or province/territory if within Canada).
 - Translated documents may be referenced as a supporting tool for data entry into PHIMS.

Data Entry Process

- The QA Clerks utilize **Country Repositories** when entering immunization data into PHIMS.
 - These repositories provide country-specific guidelines for mapping immunizations from the original record to corresponding agents in PHIMS.
 - Any records that cannot confirm the exact product are entered into PHIMS as a broad vaccine category where the provider can review from a clinical perspective to determine if further immunizations are required based on the individuals age, health status and Manitoba's vaccine eligibility criteria.
 - For example – record submitted to QA team identifies pneumococcal vaccine but are unable to specify which one (Pevnar 20, Pevnar 13, Pneumo-23,etc). The vaccine will be entered on the person's record as OOP-Pneumococcal (OOP=Out of Province).
 - These records are not considered valid immunizations and are not considered as part of the PHIMS forecaster feature.

Completion and Client Communication

- The client receives a confirmation email with a completed script.
- An information letter is mailed to them along with a hard copy of their new Manitoba Immunization Record.
 - The record will also include any vaccines that may be outstanding based on the Routine Immunization Schedules.
- If certain immunizations cannot be entered due to illegibility or lack of corresponding agents in PHIMS (e.g., Hand, Foot, and Mouth vaccines), the client is contacted by phone and informed of the details. This information is also included in the completion email.

Information Letter



Health
300 Carlton Street, Winnipeg MB R3B 3M9
www.manitoba.ca

Important Health Information Inside

Thank you for submitting a record of the vaccines you or your child received outside of Manitoba. The immunization record(s) you submitted have been added into Manitoba's provincial immunization registry*. This allowed Manitoba Health to create you or your child's new Manitoba Immunization Record.

Please review the new immunization record.

If you find any of the information is incomplete or incorrect, please submit a form online at: manitoba.ca/immunization-update-request/. An accurate immunization record is important. It will also help Manitoba Health and your health-care provider see if you or your child have all the vaccines needed to be protected against vaccine preventable diseases.

The immunization record may show that you or your child need more vaccines. This is based on Manitoba's Routine Immunization Schedules. If this is the case, contact a doctor or other health care provider to review. Bring the new immunization record with you to this appointment. You do not have to pay for these vaccines.

Locating Health Services:

- You can be connected to a family doctor through Family Doctor Finder. Please visit manitoba.ca/health/familydoctorfinder/.
- You can also find information on accessing health care services at: manitoba.ca/health/primarycare/access/index.html.
- You may also contact your local Public Health Office. Please visit manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/offices.html to find the public health office closest to you.
- If you have a health question you can call Health Links – Info Santé in Manitoba. It is a free bilingual phone-based service available in English and French. Interpreter services are available in over 200 languages. You can call 204-788-8200 in Winnipeg or 1-888-315-9257 (toll free in Manitoba). Registered nurses are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They can provide assessment and health care advice to individuals of all ages.

Manitoba's Immunization Schedules

- Routine Immunization Schedules: manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/div/schedules.html
- Immunization Schedules for Individuals NOT Previously Immunized: manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/div/not.html.

Information on vaccines

- Manitoba Health Immunization (Vaccination): manitoba.ca/immunization.

*Information about the provincial immunization registry:

The provincial immunization registry contains information about the immunizations you or your child(ren) received. It is a secure electronic public health record. *The Personal Health Information Act* protects your information. You can have your immunization information hidden from view. For more information, please ask your immunizer when you go for your immunization.

Immunization Record

This document contains personal health information and is confidential. Personal health information may only be collected, used or disclosed where allowed by the Personal Health Information Act. If you have received this document in error, please immediately destroy it in a secure manner and notify the sender. Any unauthorized use, disclosure, distribution, or copying is strictly prohibited.

Personal Information

Cantrell-W-20240131 Celina-1
406 SCURFIELD BLVD
WINNIPEG MANITOBA R2Y 1L3

Personal Health Number: 370015348
Date of Birth: 2012-Apr-01
Age: 13 yrs 9 mos at date of printing

Immunization History

Vaccine	MB Code	Date of Immunization(s) and Vaccine Lot Number
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Acellular Pertussis, Inactivated Polio	DTaP-IPV	2017 Apr 01 (NA)
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Acellular Pertussis, Inactivated Polio, Haemophilus influenzae type b	DTaP-IPV-Hib	2012 May 30 (NA) 2012 Jul 30 (NA) 2012 Sep 29 (NA) 2013 Sep 30 (NA)
Hepatitis B	HB	2024 Feb 08 (AHBVC561AM)
Human Papillomavirus 9-valent	HPV	2024 Feb 08 (N028718)
Measles, Mumps, Rubella	MMR	2013 Apr 01 (NA)
Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella	MMRV	2017 Apr 01 (NA)
Pneumococcal Conjugate 7-valent	Pneu-C-7	2012 May 30 (NA) 2012 Jul 30 (NA) 2012 Sep 29 (NA) 2014 Sep 30 (NA)

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Next Immunizations Due

Vaccine	MB Code	Dose Number	Due Date	Status
Meningococcal Conjugate ACYW-135	Men-C-ACYW-135	1	2022 Dec 01	Overdue
Hepatitis B	HB	2	2024 Aug 08	Overdue
Human Papillomavirus 9-valent	HPV	2	2024 Aug 08	Overdue
Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis	Tdap	6	2024 Dec 01	Due
Varicella	Var	2	2025 Apr 01	Overdue
Influenza	Inf	Annual	Fall	

Note:

The immunizations listed in the "Next Immunizations Due" table are based on Manitoba's Routine Immunization Schedule. Influenza immunization is recommended every year for most Manitobans. Additional vaccine(s) may be recommended for you by your health care provider based on your personal health needs.

Details on the requests received

- Since the start of the newcomer program, MB has received requests from 104 countries.
- The top countries are:

1	Canada
2	India
3	Nigeria
4	Philippines
5	Ukraine
6	China
7	Hong Kong
8	United States
9	Colombia
10	Mexico

Annual Breakdown – All Submissions

	2023		2024		2025	
	Within Canada	International	Within Canada	International	Within Canada	International
Jan			14	48	11	54
Feb			4	42	6	42
Mar			19	77	11	60
Apr	1	2	20	54	16	89
May	11	15	9	67	25	70
Jun	16	61	4	65	17	38
Jul	18	60	15	92	9	61
Aug	9	39	9	71	8	76
Sep	10	35	11	89	6	86
Oct	5	39	17	73	14	69
Nov	17	45	14	72	14	37
Dec	3	26	8	36	11	15
Total	90	322	144	786	148	697
Total Submissions	412		930		845	

Successfully Fulfilled Requests

- Requests are deemed successfully fulfilled when all required actions have been completed in alignment with client expectations and organizational standards.
- Circumstances under which a request may not be considered successfully fulfilled:
 - The client submits a duplicate request, resulting in redundancy.
 - The client fails to respond to follow-up communications seeking additional information or documentation necessary for completion.
 - The client provides additional information through a new request, which alters or supersedes the original submission.

Year	Successful Requests	Success Rate (%)
2023	343	83%
2024	765	82%
2025	641	76%

Reminder Letters and Immunization Records

- In addition, MB mails out reminder letters each month to those aged 15 months, 20 months and 5 ½ years advising of any vaccines that are “due” or “overdue” as part of the routine immunization schedule. These letters include a copy of their immunization record.
 - Immunization records are also mailed to all Manitobans when they turn 7 and 18 years of age; these records also indicate any routine vaccines that they may be missing.
 - Newcomer populations would also receive these letters once they have their MB PHIN.
 - These letters are under review to include the process of submitting records electronically.

Challenges

- While processes exist to collect and enter newcomers' immunization records into PHIMS, the processes are still reactive and client-led rather than proactive.
- Due to the highly detailed and continuously evolving nature of this process, the team consistently navigates a range of complex challenges, including:
 - Language barriers, both within the documentation received and during direct communication with clients.
 - Inaccuracies in translated documents, which can compromise data integrity.
 - Variations in calendar systems utilized across countries (e.g., Gregorian vs. Geez [Ethiopian]), impacting date verification.
 - Difficulty obtaining valid documentation from refugee clients originating from regions affected by war or conflict.
 - Inconsistent vaccine nomenclature, with multiple naming conventions for the same immunization within a single country and across different countries.
 - Evolving immunization schedules globally, complicating efforts to validate historical records accurately.



Next Steps

Future Initiatives

- Look at the ability for newcomer populations to submit immunization records during registration with Manitoba Health for Insured Benefits as part of the updated electronic registration process.
- Online portal coming in 2026 that will allow residents 18+ to see their immunization record.
 - Look to add information on how to report any immunizations from out of province.
 - Additional ages will be added later.
- Reviewing the overdue reminder letters to add one in adolescent years.
- Looking forward to the work occurring within Immigration Canada on the provision of formal immunization records to newcomer populations that will provide more accurate records to jurisdictions to assist with the entry into provincial registries.

Thank you

- Allana Beavis, Policy Analyst, Communicable Disease Prevention and Control
- Stacey Bulat, Manager of Quality Assurance, Public Health Information Systems

Thank you. Questions?

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