

Tool 5: Letter to Pharmacies Regarding Influenza Antiviral Orders

Date: _____

Dear Pharmacist,

Long Term Care facilities within the Fraser Health region follow the Viral Respiratory Illness Outbreak Protocol and Toolkit when managing respiratory outbreaks. This protocol includes a preprinted order for influenza antiviral prophylaxis or treatment for confirmed influenza outbreaks and those that are highly suspected to be caused by influenza (Tool 3).

Influenza antivirals should be initiated when an influenza outbreak or an outbreak highly suspected to be caused by influenza is declared by Public Health. During peak influenza activity period, Public Health may presumptively initiate antivirals recognizing that there is a high pre-test probability that influenza is the causative virus. If it is confirmed that influenza virus is not the causative organisms, antivirals will be discontinued.

There have been some concerns in the past, expressed by pharmacists, to initiate influenza antivirals without the receipt of a respiratory illness outbreak notification (RION) from the Care Community. However, this can cause delays in initiating antivirals promptly, which can lead to further transmission of influenza. To avoid delays in starting antivirals as soon as possible, facilities may communicate outbreak information to the pharmacy verbally without an emailed RION. **Please initiate antivirals without a RION in these cases.** There is no requirement to receive the emailed RION prior to dispensing antivirals to a facility Care Community

The Viral Respiratory Illness Outbreak Protocol and Toolkit is available on the Fraser Health Website by searching "Respiratory Outbreaks" on [fraserhealth.ca](https://www.fraserhealth.ca).

If you have any questions, please contact the Public Health at 604-507-5471.

Thank you,