

Press Release - *Improving vaccine confidence and uptake in Canada in light of new COVID-19 vaccine innovations*

TORONTO, June 22, 2023 – The International Federation on Ageing (IFA) has released a series of resources for Canadians to assist them in staying up to date with their COVID-19 immunizations. In January 2023, the IFA gathered experts on vaccination policy together to discuss how to improve Canadians’ access to and knowledge of innovations in COVID-19 vaccines. Despite COVID-19 continuing to pose a threat to the health of older adults in Canada, uptake of new bivalent vaccines is low. One barrier that was identified was a lack of understanding around why regular booster doses are required for optimal protection against COVID-19. Cera Cruise, Project and Policy Coordinator at the IFA, shares the following:

“Despite the recent announcement from the World Health Organization (WHO) indicating that COVID-19 is no longer considered a global health emergency, it is clear that COVID will remain an ongoing public health issue that requires our constant vigilance. In the face of waning global attention we must ensure that Canadians have access to and are informed regarding their vaccination status in order to continue to protect and promote both their own health as well as the health of those around them.”

In response to this problem the IFA created a guide to COVID-19 immunization, customized for each province and territory, to assist individuals in understanding their eligibility for COVID-19 vaccination as well as the risks that COVID-19 infection can pose to their health. Evidence has shown that age, alongside chronic underlying conditions, are both risk factors for serious and life-threatening outcomes from COVID-19 infection. COVID-19 vaccines are effective at preventing severe disease, hospitalization, and death from infection. However, protection against mild and moderate disease may reduce over time, especially amongst at-risk populations including older adults. For the best protection, it is recommended to stay up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccinations including booster doses.

Access province and territory-specific information [here](#) and share these free resources with patients, constituents, friends, and family members. Together we all contribute to creating a healthy Canada.

About the International Federation on Ageing

The International Federation on Ageing (IFA) is an international, non-governmental organization (NGO) with a unique membership base comprising government, NGOs, academics, industry, and individuals in over 80 countries. Now over 45 years old, the IFA has become known as a leading and innovative organization that works across disciplines and sectors toward common goals that improve the lives of older people. Through the IFA’s formal relations with the World Health Organization (WHO) and general consultative status at the United Nations and its agencies, the IFA is in the position to advocate directly with member states and contribute to and inform intergovernmental dialogue.