

August 2021

Dear families,

With the start of school just about a month away, the minds of parents, guardians and youth are turning to the upcoming school year. I recognize how challenging the last school year was for children and families, and I want to thank you for your efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

If you have children 12 and over who haven't yet had their first or second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, I strongly encourage you to make an appointment for them as soon as you can. If you and/or your children are eligible to move up your already-scheduled appointment, please do so. You can get your second dose 28 days after your first dose. The vaccine is safe and effective.

We all need two doses of the vaccine to be fully protected, and it takes two weeks after your second dose to have full immunity. The first day of school is now about four weeks away.

- The sooner people get two doses of the vaccine, the sooner they will be fully protected, which also means they are protecting children under 12 years of age and others who cannot get the vaccine, as well as families and friends.
- Also, the sooner we, as a province, get to 75% of all Nova Scotians who are fully vaccinated with two doses of vaccine, along with good epidemiology, the sooner we will be able to move to phase 5 and lift restrictions and mandatory measures.

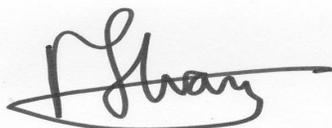
It is quick and easy to book or reschedule an appointment, and there are lots of Pfizer and Moderna appointments available. To find out more about the vaccine and book an appointment, visit [www.novascotia.ca/vaccineplan](http://www.novascotia.ca/vaccineplan) or call 1-833-797-7772.

When we lift restrictions and mandatory measures in Nova Scotia, and even if you are fully vaccinated, it will still be important for all Nova Scotians to continue to follow good public health practices like staying home when sick, washing hands regularly, coughing and sneezing into your elbow, and regularly cleaning surfaces touched by many people. People may also wish to continue wearing non-medical masks in public places, especially during flu season. Practices like these help prevent the spread of a number of illnesses, including COVID 19, and keep people in schools, homes and other settings healthier.

Public Health is working closely with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development on a detailed Return to School plan that will be available soon.

I hope the rest of your summer is safe and enjoyable!

Sincerely,



Robert Strang MD, MHSc., FRCPC  
Chief Medical Officer of Health