

**COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution
Task Force**

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Chair

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**Groupe d'étude de la distribution
des vaccins contre la COVID-19**

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<By email>

February 5, 2021

Dr. John D. Parker
Board Member
Ontario Association of Cardiologists Board of Directors
34 Eglinton Avenue West, Suite 410
Toronto, ON M4R 2H6
c/o tholman@ontac.ca

Dear Dr. John D. Parker:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Ontario Association of Cardiologists (OAC) on January 24, requesting to prioritize health care professionals working in non-hospital ambulatory cardiology clinics. As a valued stakeholder, we appreciate hearing your views and concerns about the critical role played by your members and the staff in these clinics.

The government's approach to vaccine distribution is informed by science and prioritizes population groups that are at greatest risk of exposure to or serious illness from COVID-19 and the ethical framework for COVID-19.

As you may be aware, groups receiving vaccine doses in Phase One of the Ontario immunization program are those at a higher risk of infection and serious illness from COVID-19, including:

- Residents, staff, essential caregivers and other employees of congregate living settings that provide care for seniors, such as long-term care homes and retirement homes
- Health care workers, such as hospital employees and other staff who work or study in hospitals, as well as other health care personnel
- Adults in Indigenous communities, including remote communities where risk of transmission is high
- Adult recipients of chronic home health care

All those working for a health care organization, such as those working in non-hospital ambulatory cardiology clinics, are considered part of the health care worker prioritization.

Prioritization of types of workers within an organization will consider the range of factors outlined in *Guidance for Prioritizing Health Care Workers for COVID-19 Vaccination* (attached), such as:

- Those who provide direct and more frequent or sustained care, or whose presence in those environments is more direct, frequent, or sustained versus those in non-patient facing, administrative roles and health care workers who can work from home/remotely
- Those who are over 60 years old or who, based on voluntary self-report, consider themselves to be at higher risk due to biological, social, or geographical factors

The current immediate priority is to vaccinate all of Ontario's long-term care and higher-risk retirement home residents, their staff and essential caregivers. However, health care workers, including primary care professionals, have also been identified as a priority group for COVID vaccination.

The goal is to vaccinate all eligible and willing health care workers as quickly as possible based on vaccine availability.

Public health units and local health care partners will be responsible for sub-prioritizing within the identified priority populations in line with Ontario's ethical framework or COVID-19 vaccine distribution and priority population risk matrix. For specific information on when health care professionals will be able to receive vaccines, we recommend they speak with their public health unit.

We also want to thank you for your interest in helping the Province deliver a successful COVID-19 vaccine program through your infrastructure of community-based cardiology clinics and appreciate your offer to assist with vaccine distribution.

We are currently evaluating our current/future needs and I have forwarded your email to our logistics team to ensure they are aware of your offer. Should we require any assistance, a ministry representative will reach out.

Thank you again for your letter and we hope the information provided has been helpful.

Sincerely,



General (Ret'd) Rick Hillier
Chair of the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force

c: Premier Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
The Honourable Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General