



Limited Access Vaccinator Program

FACT SHEET

Manitoba Community-Based Lay Vaccinator Working Group

The Manitoba Community-Based Lay Vaccinator Working Group (“Working Group”) was established in the fall of 2021, following a request by the Winnipeg Humane Society (WHS) for participation from the Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA) and the Government of Manitoba, Chief Veterinary Office (CVO).

The initiative addresses the critical shortage of veterinary professionals in Manitoba, specifically in rural and remote areas. Ideally, the MVMA would want veterinary professionals to provide veterinary services to the entire province. However, the current shortage of veterinary professionals and the challenging logistics of providing care to remote and isolated populations means that this is not feasible.

The Manitoba Veterinary Technologists Association supports the creation of this program as Registered Veterinary Technologists (RVTs) serve as excellent candidates for Designated Vaccinators as they are trained and competent to administer vaccines safely, provide education to the public about vaccines and other animal health-related matters, and identify vaccine reaction signs, in addition to numerous other skills and competencies.

Consultation Timeline

The “Working Group” conducted an extensive consultation process with membership, including written feedback (June 13, 2023 - September 19, 2023) and a virtual consultation session (September 12, 2023), as well as an in-depth analysis and review of feedback received in the fall of 2023.

Risks and Issues Addressed

Risks to the public and their animals are increased in areas with limited or no veterinary care access. Many communities can only be accessed by plane or winter road, reducing the ability to receive regular veterinary care. The limited access is compounded by the veterinary shortages in Manitoba, which makes it impossible to provide regular care to all of Manitoba’s at-risk animals.

Rabies: Rabies can be treated with animal vaccines and antibody injections for humans (called Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis, or RPEP). However, when left untreated, rabies is 100% fatal once symptoms appear. In Canada, rabies is spread to people and domestic animals by wildlife (bites and saliva). Arctic foxes, skunks, and bats carry their own strain of rabies virus and pose a threat to Manitobans.

Dogs play an important role in the transmission of rabies between wildlife, other domestic animals, and people. Dog vaccination is an easy and affordable intervention to prevent the spread of rabies. In many

remote communities facing limited veterinary care, dogs are assumed to be unvaccinated, and people often receive RPEP immediately after a stray or roaming dog bite, only discontinuing treatment when dogs test negative. By vaccinating dogs in Manitoba's at-risk communities, fewer people will need to undergo RPEP after a dog bite, and fewer dogs will be euthanized for rabies testing.

Program Details

The Limited Access Vaccinator Program comes into effect on June 1, 2024. Veterinary oversight is essential for ensuring the safe delivery of veterinary services. Under this program, a veterinarian (Sponsoring Veterinarian) is able to partner with a Registered Veterinary Technologist (RVT) or a layperson to provide access to veterinary services.

The Sponsoring Veterinarian is responsible for:

- Ensuring the Designated Vaccinator is appropriately trained
- Providing appropriate equipment
- Ensure proper documentation and vaccine handling
- Making vaccine information available to the public
- Reporting to the MVMA on an annual basis for program monitoring
- Indirect supervision of the Designated Vaccinator

The Designated Vaccinator (RVT or Lay Persons)

- Works under the indirect supervision (virtual/distant) of the Supervising Veterinarian
- Is solely able to provide services to canine and feline patients by:
 - o Administering rabies vaccine
 - o Administering feline viral Rhinotracheitis-Calicivirus-Panleukopenia +/- Chlamydia vaccine (FVRCP vaccine)
 - o Administering canine Distemper-Adenovirus2-Parainfluenza-Parvovirus vaccine (DA2PP vaccine)
 - o Administering non-prescription deworming medication
 - o Administering microchips
 - o Administering over the counter (OTC) medication

The MVMA

- Maintains a roster of Designated Vaccinators
- Information about participants and the geographical areas covered will be published for transparency and to help facilitate access to care.

Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

This program seeks to ensure safe practice while respecting the tenets of reconciliation. In the context of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, enabling community-led service delivery, instead of relying solely on external providers, fosters services that are more respectful and culturally appropriate, including:

Self-Determination: Indigenous communities have the right to self-determination, including the ability to make decisions about their well-being and development. Allowing for within-community service delivery empowers Indigenous communities to take control of their affairs, including delivering essential services.

Cultural Relevance: Services delivered from within the community are more likely to be culturally relevant and respectful of Indigenous traditions, languages, and ways of knowing. This is crucial for the well-being of Indigenous Peoples, as it ensures that services are provided in a manner that aligns with their cultural values and practices.

Building Trust and Relationships: By allowing for within-community service delivery, trust and relationships within the community can be strengthened. This approach fosters a sense of ownership and accountability, leading to more effective and sustainable solutions to address the community's needs.

Addressing Historical Injustices: Historically, Indigenous communities have experienced marginalization and mistreatment at the hands of external service providers. Allowing for within-community service delivery is a step towards addressing these historical injustices and promotes healing and reconciliation.