

Changing the Way We Work

February 21, 2025: Infectious Disease &
Navigating Ontario's Disability Support Program

Panelists: Dr. Alon Vaisman, Dr. Mohamed Alarakhia, Norma English
Moderator: Dr. Ali Damji

Curated answers from CoP guests, panelists and co-hosts to the top five in-session questions posed by participants, based on current guidance and information available at the time.

What is the recommendation for RSV vaccination in newborns once we are out of the fall and winter season? How is RSV season defined in terms of vaccine eligibility?

For infants at risk (premature, chronic illnesses, immunocompromised), they should be offered RSV monoclonal antibodies when entering or born during their first RSV season or during their second RSV season.

When should Shingrix be repeated? How long is the benefit of vaccination?

Shingrix is a 2-dose vaccine separated by up to 6 months, and no repeat doses are indicated afterwards.

Should Shingrix be recommended for a healthy 50-year-old patient? Or should they wait until they are older, since a booster is not advised?

They can wait until they 65-70 (when the cost is covered) or get it a bit earlier, in their sixties.

Although there is waning impact from Shingrix, the current guidelines don't recommend boosting with Shingrix.

What do you say to the patient when asking for consent to use AI in your encounter?

Here is the script I use: I'm using a tool to [insert reason: i.e. capture notes during our visit to reduce the need for me to type notes while we speak to each other]. The tool is like an assistant, and it uses AI (artificial intelligence). The information recorded during the visit [insert how it will be use, disclosed, retained by you and/or the tool

vendor]. You don't have to agree to the use of the tool during your visit, and we will only proceed if you are comfortable with it. Like any of your personal information, this is only something that I or others in your circle of care will see and the AI-generated note will be reviewed by me before I accept it as final. Are you ok if I use this technology that will document a transcript of our conversation into your chart?

Any tips for recording physical exam with AI?

I usually dictate the physical exam after the encounter into the AI Scribe. It is more efficient if you talk aloud during the physical exam, but I still don't do great at that.

These additional questions and comments were answered live during the session. To view responses, please refer to the session recording.

- Can you please provide updates on the avian flu? Should we be wearing N95s? When can healthcare workers be vaccinated? How likely is it to become a pandemic?
- Is there any benefit to getting a flu shot booster, if a patient received their flu shot early, given the later peak this year?
- What is the current state of community family doctors ordering PCR swabs (for COVID-19, RSV, flu). Are we not able to test in the community?
- Should we still be recommending the COVID-19 vaccine for pregnant women?
- Will coverage for the RSV vaccine be expanded next year?
- What do we know right now about how harmful COVID-19 continues to be? It still seems to have mortality associated with it, and people are hospitalized with it more than flu and RSV, still has long version of illness...so how benign is it, really?
- Should we stop feeding the birds with our bird feeders?
- What's the ideal age to vaccinate with Shingrix, cost aside?
- When is RSV season anticipated to be over? When do we stop offering the RSV vaccine to older adults and Beyfortus for infants?
- If patients over 65 received Prevnar 13 (and/or Pneumovax 23), should they also get Prevnar 20? If so, when? Is it publicly funded?
- How do AI scribes handle bilingual/trilingual conversations?
- How are vendors addressing "hallucinations" in the AI tools?
- I just can't see yet how AI tools are going to save us time if I have to read everything.
- What will be the cost for the physicians for implementing and using AI?
- Should each AI note/form or suggestion/message be flagged in the chart as done by AI?

- How much do these AI platforms cost? Can I just add on to existing computer or is there extra equipment/wiring that is required?
- For AI to auto fill forms these forms must be online. Many times, we get paper forms and must fill them out by hand.
- If a patient is not working due to work-place injury, and is having a hard time getting support with WSIB, is there any harm to the patient if we fill out an ODSB form while they are in the WSIB process?
- Should we fill out Ontario Works and ODSB forms at the same time?
- Who should apply for ODSP and how much to they get per month? Is there back pay?
- The issue is that physicians are not able to assess what a patient can or cannot do. How do I know if a patient can do laundry, for example, if I never see them do the task? This must be done by an occupational therapist.
- How much income does the patient receive if successful with ODSP?