



# A Trauma-and Violence-Informed Care (TVIC) Approach to COVID-19 Vaccination Administration

Canada's COVID-19 Immunization Plan<sup>1</sup> indicates that clinics and outreach models established for the provision and delivery of immunizations embed trauma-informed approaches within the care and services provided. This resource provides guidance for program managers and staff, vaccinators, and public health nurses on how to apply TVIC principles during the vaccine administration process.

## Trauma-and Violence-Informed Care Principles

Understand that experiences of trauma and violence impact an individual's health and how they feel, think, and behave.

Prioritize creating culturally, emotionally and physically safe environments for clients, staff, and volunteers.

Foster opportunities to connect, collaborate, and offer meaningful choices.

Use a strengths-based and capacity building approach to support clients.

## Booking the Appointment

- ☐ Engage community partners (e.g., libraries, social service agencies) to help people who have limited access to technology to book appointments and assist with transportation.
- ☐ Provide detailed information on logistics.
- ☐ Send reminder alerts – by text, phone, or email as preferred by the person (ask them!).
- ☐ Phone lines: to create an immediate connection, answer each call with a warm hello and your first name.
- ☐ Have an up-to-date “FAQ” section on public health unit, and other providers' websites.
- ☐ Identify if interpretation support will be required at the appointment, ensure this information is included clearly in the person's profile, and make interpretation arrangements.
- ☐ Clarify that the location meets accessibility requirements (even if not asked about this).
- ☐ Clarify the person's preferred pronouns and ensure this information is included clearly in the person's profile

### Logistics

- ☐ location/time of appointment
- ☐ parking (cost?)
- ☐ what they need to bring (e.g., health card) or shouldn't bring
- ☐ who can accompany them to the appointment
- ☐ what they can expect when they arrive (e.g., to wait in line outside)
- ☐ what to wear (e.g., short, loose sleeve if possible)
- ☐ what to expect when the vaccinator arrives (for mobile clinics)
- ☐ type of PPE to wear
- ☐ what information they should be prepared to share (e.g., allergy history, medical conditions)

**Practice tip:** Staff responding to an overwhelming number of calls may find that some members of the public are frustrated, anxious, or angry. Before reacting or providing standard information, first listen to the caller and then validate their concerns. Supervisors should provide frequent breaks for staff and have “back-up” supports readily available.

## Preparing for the appointment

- ❑ Make available a checklist of actions for the day of the appointment (e.g., take regular medication, do not wear scented products, wear loose-fitting short-sleeved shirt, bring government issued ID, bring mask) and where to go. For mobile clinics provide information on how to prepare for arrival of vaccinator.
- ❑ Record a video of a popular, high-profile local leader doing a “walk-through” of the process of arriving at, receiving, and leaving the clinic site (particularly for clinics in large public settings e.g., arenas, convention centres) so people know “what to expect.” Distribute through social media.

## Arriving at the appointment

- ❑ Ensure that every staff member, professional, vaccinator or volunteer greets the person (and caregivers) with their name, credential, and role, and that the correct pronoun is used when referring to the person.
- ❑ Provide information, using multiple formats (verbal information, clear signage with words and pictures), about “what they can expect” while waiting for their appointment, and then during and after the appointment in the language required for the person to understand the information (e.g., translated materials, phone/virtual/in-person interpretation services provided).
- ❑ Identify whether the person prefers to get the vaccine in a private space. Offer choice when available.


Hello, my name is (your name).

I am a (volunteer, greeter, vaccinator, public health nurse), and I today I am here to assist you by (function).

Is there anything you'd like to share with me about your past experience(s) with vaccines or needles?

What can I do to help make this a more positive experience?

Do you have a preference for which arm I administer the vaccine into?



**Practice Tip:** At any point in the process of booking, waiting for, or receiving the vaccine, some people may be anxious. To promote emotional safety, ask:

## Administering the vaccine

- ❑ Provide name, credential, and role.
- ❑ If the person appears hesitant or anxious: ask about their concerns, actively listen to their response and validate their experience before providing standard health information/responses.
- ❑ Provide choice and control when possible.
- ❑ Briefly explain procedure for administering the vaccine and seek permission before touching their arm or rolling up their sleeve.
- ❑ If an individual is scared of “needles” – use distraction techniques such as asking them to “pretend to blow bubbles,” or tell you a funny story, answer questions honestly, don’t give false assurances, avoid using words such as “hurt, pain, sting” instead use “poke, pressure or squeeze.”



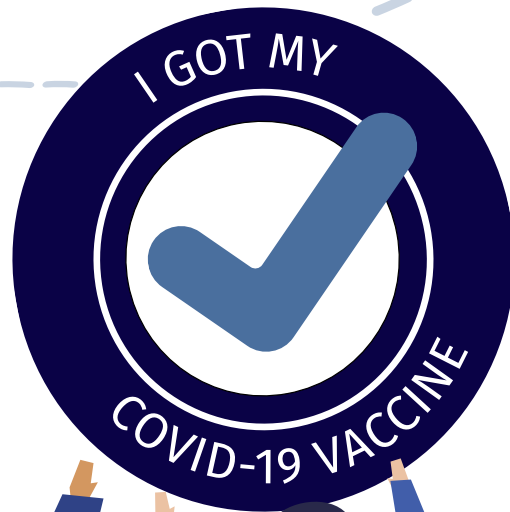
**Practice Tip:** Recommend that individuals sit up rather than lie down. Being in the supine position can increase feelings of fear or vulnerability.

## Monitoring individuals after receiving the vaccine

- ❑ Make it easy for people to know where they are to wait post-vaccine and how long they need to wait; have a clearly visible clock.
- ❑ Approach each person with respect and friendliness to provide post-vaccination information, including information about side effects (provide written after-care instructions).
- ❑ Ensure information and direction is provided in the language required for the person to understand.

## Leaving the appointment

- ❑ If a second dose is required, provide this information, including how to schedule the next appointment.
- ❑ Provide a “I got my COVID-19 vaccine!” sticker or pin.
- ❑ Thank the individual for receiving their injection, for protecting their health and that of their family, friends, and community.



For more information on TVIC, please visit  
<https://GTVIncubator.uwo.ca/>

<sup>1</sup> Government of Canada (2020). Canada's COVID-19 Immunization Plan: Saving lives and livelihoods. <https://bit.ly/38rVvbu>

**Citation:** Jack, S.M., Wathen, C.N., & Lokko, H. on behalf of the PHN-PREP Project Team (2021). A trauma-and violence-informed care (TVIC) approach to COVID-19 vaccine administration [<https://phnprep.ca/resources/tvic-approach-covid-19-vaccination-admin>]. School of Nursing, McMaster University.

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