



Fund Vaccines. Save Lives. Save Money.

CARP – Canada's largest advocacy group for older adults – is **asking the British Columbia government to cover all vaccines needed by seniors** – as determined by a medical professional – on the appropriate schedule. (For instance, yearly in the case of the high-dose influenza shot; once for the pneumococcol shot.)

Why should the province do this?

Massive savings to the health care system

If you allow for a cost of \$40.00 for a high-dose influenza vaccine per year for 10 years, you would have invested \$400.00 in that one senior. Assuming they stay out of an acute-care facility (hospital) because of this – at a current cost of over \$2,000.00 a day – the savings to our health system are obvious. If they don't catch it, they can't spread it.

It's the right thing to do

We protect our children because they are considered 'vulnerable' yet we don't offer the same service to older adults, who are considered by many to be a vulnerable sector of our society. Seniors use public transportation, attend community events and shop in stores. They are just as likely to spread a virus as children are.

Other provinces cover vaccines for seniors

BC is behind other provinces; the optics of that are not especially good for our government. The billion-dollar + surplus left by the outgoing government could cover these vaccines for seniors and would realize a significant savings to our health care system.

What are the priorities?

Influenza, Pneumonia, Chickenpox/Shingles, Hepatitis B, HPV and Pertussis (Whooping Cough), Tetanus & Diphtheria (Combined) are the six vaccinations that every adult should be up to date with – at all times. Almost all working adults have these covered or can afford them because they are earning an income. **But virtually no senior has extended medical coverage to cover these vaccines**, because they aren't employed. Many are on fixed incomes, and too many live below the poverty line. CARP's three priority areas for access to vaccines are:

Influenza

The flu can kill. The standard dose Trivalent influenza shot works fairly well for most healthy adults and is fine for many seniors. However, many seniors need the Trivalent high-dose shot because they have underlying chronic health issues like heart issues, respiratory issues, cancer, diabetes and more. The high-dose flu vaccine costs between \$75.00 and \$125.00 depending on where you are in the province – each year.

This vaccination needs to be fully funded.



Pneumonia

Pneumonia can kill, though it is rarely the main cause of death. It attacks already weakened immune systems and contributes to a large number of deaths every year. More importantly, it is the cause of countless visits to acute care facilities, stacking up thousands of hours a care staff and millions of dollars of health care funding – much of which can be avoided with regular vaccinations. A one-time vaccination costs between \$180.00 and \$230.00. **This vaccination needs to be fully funded.**

Shingles

Shingles is a debilitating, incredibly painful - and preventable - viral infection. The vaccine is recommended for anyone over 50 who has had chicken pox. There are two vaccines available in Canada, costing between \$325.00 and \$375.00 and with different dosages. **This vaccination needs to be fully funded.**

Why does this matter?

There are currently about 880,000 seniors living in this province, according to the office of the Seniors' Advocate of BC. There are more residents over the age of 65 than under the age of 15... and that gap is growing. For the most part, the retirees in this province have helped build communities, this province and/or this country for many years and yet now, when many of them need help getting critical vaccines, we are forcing those who can to dig into their pockets to pay for them. **Those who cannot, go without. They deserve better.**

What is CARP?

CARP is Canada's largest seniors advocacy group. We work with one simple goal in mind; to improve the lives of all Canadians as they age. Many of CARP's more than 300,000 members are active participants in their local chapters across the country. CARP chapter members are active advocates who work for local change while supporting national efforts. Many CARP chapters also sponsor events of interest to those who are 45+ in their communities.

CARP recently launched a national policy platform leading up to the 2019 federal election. The **FACES** of Canada's Seniors identifies 19 areas of action under five pillars: **F**inancial Security, **A**buse Prevention, **C**aregiver Support, **E**xceptional Health Care and **S**ocial Inclusion. Read more at www.carp.ca/faces.

