

Vaccinating residents and health workers during an outbreak in a long-term care home will likely have no impact on a current outbreak, but may provide future protection

Wang Q, Wilson MG, Alam S, Ahmad A, Bain T, Bhuiya A, Drakos A, Sharma K, Whitelaw S, Bain T, Lavis JN. COVID-19 rapid evidence profile #25: What do we know from both research and jurisdictional scans about prioritizing vaccination of asymptomatic residents in a long-term care home with an outbreak. Hamilton: McMaster Health Forum, 20 January 2021.

Why is all the evidence on this topic being summarized?

- Residents in long-term care homes have generally been prioritized for the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out.
- Long-term care homes (sometimes referred to as nursing homes, continuing-care facilities, or residential-care homes) provide 24/7 access to nursing and personal care to residents. This generally includes more care than can be safely met through supportive housing or a retirement home, but not so much care that they require admission to a hospital unit.
- It remains challenging to know how to handle vaccine roll-out in a long-term care home experiencing an outbreak (for example, should we prioritize residents who have no symptoms; should we vaccinate them during the outbreak or when health workers in the home have been vaccinated, or when the outbreak is relatively controlled).

What question did we want to answer?

- What do we know about prioritizing vaccination of residents who have no symptoms in a long-term care home with an outbreak?

How have we done this rapid evidence profile?

- We identified evidence addressing the question by searching the [COVID-END inventory](#) and the [COVID-END guide to key COVID-19 evidence sources](#).
- We also examined what was done in Canada and in eight other countries (Australia, China, France, Germany, Israel, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States). These countries were selected because they are advanced in the vaccination against COVID-19.

How up to date is this rapid evidence profile?

- This rapid evidence profile was published on January 20, 2021.

What are the main results of our rapid evidence profile?

- We did not find any documents providing direct evidence or guidance in relation to prioritizing vaccination of people who do not have any symptoms and are living in a long-term care homes with an outbreak.
- However, guidance released by the Ontario government recommends that:
 - prioritizing long-term care homes that do not have an outbreak is recommended;
 - vaccinating during an outbreak in a facility will likely have no impact on the present outbreak but may provide future protection; and
 - facilities with an outbreak should quickly address staffing and infection control challenges to stabilize the situation and facilitate vaccination, but the outbreak does not need to be over to begin vaccination.

How confident are we in the results?

- The body of research evidence about this issue is limited.

The COVID-19 Evidence Network to support Decision-making (COVID-END) is supported by an investment from the Government of Canada through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). To help Canadian decision-makers as they respond to unprecedented challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, COVID-END in Canada is preparing rapid evidence responses like this one. The opinions, results, and conclusions are those of the evidence-synthesis team that prepared the rapid response, and are independent of the Government of Canada and CIHR. No endorsement by the Government of Canada or CIHR is intended or should be inferred.