

Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, MD, CM, FRCP(C)  
Council of Medical Officers of Health Ontario  
Eastern Ontario Health Unit  
1000 Pitt Street  
Cornwall, ON  
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April 15, 2021

**Urgent: COVID-19 Vaccination for Child Care staff**

Dear Dr. Roumeliotis,

The College of Early Childhood Educators urges you to ensure priority access to vaccines for Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) and others working in child care.

We recognize the ongoing efforts of public health agencies in the complex task of distributing and administering the COVID-19 vaccine. It is in our collective interest to work together to ensure professionals that provide essential in-person services are prioritized to receive the vaccine for the safety and well-being of all Ontario communities.

We were disheartened by this week's announcements which, while reassuring Ontario families that child care would remain open and would also provide emergency child care for children of essential workers, failed to address vaccine priority for staff working in these environments.

While we acknowledge the government's recognition of the essential role of child care workers by including them in the groups eligible for vaccination during Phase 2, we note the recent announcements regarding immediate priority access to vaccines for special education and other education workers in school boards in certain areas, and request the same access for those working in child care.

RECEs are professionals accountable for providing safe and healthy learning environments for children. In order to ensure the safety of the learning environment, they themselves must also be safe and healthy. While RECEs have adapted to the changing environments and embraced new safety protocols, they work in situations where physical distancing is difficult, if not impossible.

The pandemic continues to highlight the critical importance of high-quality child care programs for Ontario families and the economy. To ensure that Ontario's families can continue to rely on safe, high-quality child care, RECEs and others working in the sector must be given priority access to the COVID-19 vaccine.

We strongly urge you to make RECEs and those working in child care a priority group who can access the vaccine as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



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cc.: The Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education; Phil Graham, Assistant deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, Early Years and Child Care Division; Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Public Health; Alison Blair, Associate Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health, Pandemic Response and Recovery