



11 August 2021

COVID-19 Vaccinations and Pearson College UWC

Dear Year 47 and Year 48 Students, Parents and Guardians,

This letter is to re-affirm current policy guidance from the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia regarding vaccination status and the importance of immunization against COVID-19 to protect each other, our community and other communities from the serious health consequences caused by the spread of this harmful and potentially deadly virus.

All public health authorities and governments in Canada continue to strongly urge everyone eligible to get vaccinated. In British Columbia, everyone living the province who is 12 years of age or older, including international and out-of-province students, is eligible to register for and receive an approved vaccine. COVID-19 vaccines approved for use in Canada are free of charge and are being made available at least throughout 2021.

For those students arriving who are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated, the College's Director of Health Services will assist in coordinating your vaccine registration after you have completed your mandatory 14-day quarantine. Additional information on vaccine registration and the type of World Health Organization (WHO) approved COVID-19 vaccines administered in B.C. can be found [here](#).

While COVID-19 vaccinations are not mandatory in Canada or B.C. at this time, as we have reiterated in earlier College correspondence and outreach, vaccines are saving lives and dramatically reducing the severity of COVID-related symptoms. They do more than protect the people who are receiving vaccinations, they also protect everyone around them, including their friends, peers and families.

The more people in a community who are immunized and protected from COVID-19, the harder it is for the virus to spread. Communities like Pearson are particularly vulnerable because of the proximity between students in dormitory accommodation and the close contact between everyone on campus in classrooms, common areas and in community activities. We already know how quickly the virus, particularly the Delta variant, can spread in environments where people gather.

Consequently, the College strongly urges that all students recommended for an approved vaccine receive them prior to, or as soon as practicable, after their arrival. All employees, residents and volunteers eligible for vaccination are likewise strongly recommended to do the same.

Beyond this, it is important to understand there is considerable discussion in British Columbia and across Canada about better managing the risk of COVID-19 infection through mandatory immunization. Any such measure would of course accommodate individuals unable to vaccinate for health reasons.

These discussions are prompted by the development and spread of more infectious COVID variants, such as the Delta variant which is now dominant in parts of the United States and other countries. This has

prompted many large U.S. health organizations to mandate coronavirus vaccines for frontline workers while other organizations have directed all employees to get vaccinated or be subject to frequent COVID testing.

With this in mind, it is important for all students and families to be fully aware that any organization, especially a boarding school with residential accommodation like Pearson, may move to a mandatory vaccination position as federal, provincial or local health guidance evolves.

As we write this update, some universities in Canada have already moved to a mandatory vaccination requirement and pressure is building elsewhere for other institutions to follow suit. As a boarding school where students share sleeping spaces the case is even more compelling. We also need to be aware that the community will be more comfortable allowing students to leave and return to campus if all eligible individuals are fully vaccinated.

Vaccination is a complex and personal issue, but one that affects not only the individual but the community. At Pearson, we will continue to closely monitor all public health government guidance for any updates. In the meantime, until further policy guidance is issued by public health or government authorities, the College's position and practices will continue to follow current guidance provided by the BC Ministry of Advanced Education's [COVID-19 Return to Campus Guidelines](#), as well as the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#), the Office of the [Provincial Health Officer](#) and our own [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#).

At Pearson College UWC, we can all contribute personally and professionally by getting vaccinated, following our campus safety and communicable disease plans, performing our daily health check, staying home when sick (including student isolation as directed by the College Health Centre), wearing masks as required or recommended, respecting handwashing and hygiene etiquette, and following public health guidance both on and off campus. It is our collective efforts that will make the difference for all.

The College will continue to provide updates on any further public health direction or guidance from federal and provincial authorities. Thank you for your continued support and contribution to student and community health and safety. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding any of the above, please send your queries to the College's Director of Admissions, Melody Miu (mmiu@pearsoncollege.ca) or alternatively, the Dean of Students, Angela Gatari (agatari@pearsoncollege.ca).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Craig Davis', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Craig Davis
President and Head of College