

March 1, 2018

## **Update: Important Changes to Manitoba's Rotavirus Immunization Program**

**All infants born on or after March 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 are eligible for 3 doses of rotavirus vaccine (RotaTeq®) at 2, 4, and 6 months of age.** This change in rotavirus immunization schedule is due to a national transition from Rotarix™ vaccine (a live monovalent (Rota-1) vaccine administered orally at 2 and 4 months) to RotaTeq® vaccine (a live pentavalent (Rota-5) vaccine administered orally at 2, 4 and 6 months). Rotarix™ (GSK) and RotaTeq® (Merck) are equivalent vaccines in terms of clinical safety and efficacy.

The first dose of rotavirus vaccine should be given no earlier than 6 weeks of age and before 15 weeks of age, with at least 4 weeks between doses. The administration of all doses must be completed by 8 months of age.

Generally, all infants born on or before February 28<sup>th</sup> 2018 will be on the 2-dose schedule (Rotarix™ at 2 and 4 months). Given that the two rotavirus vaccines differ in composition and schedule, **the vaccine series should be completed with the same product whenever possible.**

- If any dose in the series was RotaTeq®, a total of 3 doses should be administered.
- If the first dose was unknown, complete the series with 2 doses of RotaTeq®.
- If the first dose was Rotarix™ and Rotarix™ is unavailable, complete the schedule with two doses of RotaTeq®.

### **Please avoid any Rotarix™ wastage wherever possible.**

**Please note that a new tariff code has been added to delineate between the two rotavirus vaccines: tariff 8778 for rota-5 (RotaTeq®). The old tariff code, 8897, is still active and is to be used for rota-1 (Rotarix™) administration.** It is of the utmost importance to delineate which vaccine (tariff 8778 or 8897) was used for the vaccine to be accurately captured in the Manitoba Immunization Registry in order to aid in clinical decision-making.

The updated *Rotavirus Vaccine Factsheet for Parents & Guardians* and the updated *Questions & Answers for Health Care Providers* documents will be available online April 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 at: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/diseases/rotavirus.html>.

Please share this information with all relevant colleagues in your facility or clinic.

Sincerely,

*“Original signed by”*

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