



**BC NURSES'  
UNION**

*Standing up for health care*

## POSITION STATEMENT



# VACCINATION

[www.bcnu.org](http://www.bcnu.org)

AUGUST 2021

 *move!p*

*BCNU strongly encourages nurses, other health-care workers and the general public to be vaccinated against communicable diseases as a preventive measure and in accordance with the most recent scientific evidence. Vaccination provides an important layer of protection against many communicable diseases, and BCNU believes that education is the most appropriate means of achieving high vaccination rates for nurses, other health-care workers and the general public.*

- Like any medical treatment or procedure, each individual must have the opportunity to inform themselves of the potential risks and benefits of immunization, based on their understanding of the evidence and in discussion with their family physician or other care provider.
- Employers should work with nurses and other health-care workers on developing supportive vaccination policies to achieve high vaccination rates in the health-care workforce. Evidence shows that punitive or coercive vaccination policies in workplaces can create conflict, damage trust, and may unintentionally heighten vaccine hesitancy by feeding into false narratives on vaccine safety.<sup>1</sup>
- Employers should also work with nurses and other health-care workers who are unable to be vaccinated to ensure they have access to work that keeps them and their patients as safe as possible.
- Nurses in BC have a unique opportunity to educate the public on the risks and benefits of available vaccines, the importance of ensuring safety and efficacy in the development of vaccines, and the possible outcomes of forgoing vaccination.
- While vaccination is an important element of an overall infectious disease prevention plan, adequate staffing, elimination of hospital over-crowding, adequate handwashing stations and supplies, easily accessible personal protective equipment (PPE) and isolation of those with infectious diseases must also be in place.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For further information on vaccination, visit [www.immunizebc.ca](http://www.immunizebc.ca). To discuss your employer's vaccination policy, contact your BCNU regional council member. Visit [www.bcnu.org](http://www.bcnu.org) or refer to Update Magazine for your regional council member's contact information.

1. Galanakis, E., Jansen, A., Lopalco, P.L. & Giesecke, J. (2013). Ethics of mandatory vaccination for healthcare workers. *Euro Surveill*, 18(45).