



# Recommendations to Improve COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution and Rollout

April 21, 2021



# Summary

This report summarizes how the vaccine ordering and delivery system can be improved for clinics, and how clinics can help to expand the vaccine rollout to reach more Manitobans.

The provincial Vaccine Implementation Task Force requested feedback on shifting to a new vaccine ordering approach for medical clinics and pharmacies

Doctors Manitoba received input from participating medical clinics and held a workshop to prototype how the vaccine ordering and delivery system could be improved. This analysis also utilized results from recent surveys of physicians and the public.

Key findings:

- The existing delivery system has been unpredictable and unreliable. This has resulted in delays in how quickly clinics can administer vaccine doses.
- A weekly ordering system would be a significant improvement, but only if it is administered in a reliable and equitable way.

- While doctors' offices are the preferred vaccine location for 88% of Manitobans, only 4% of doses have been shared with doctors' offices.
- Clinics have capacity to offer up to 8,800 doses per day, 2.5 times the province's current plans.
- Vaccine supply is the limiting factor for clinics.

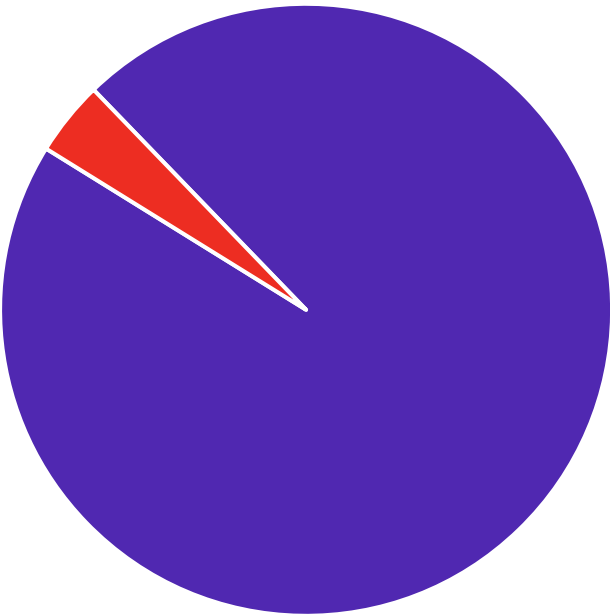
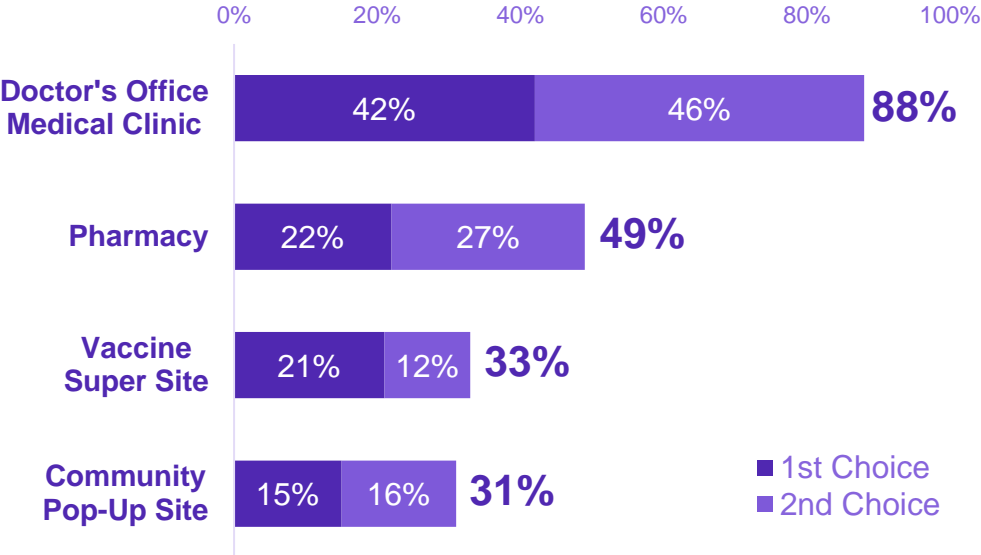
## Recommendations:

1. Shift to a more routine, “pull” vaccine ordering system, ensuring it is reliable and that doses are administered equitably.
2. Allocate more vaccine doses to doctors' offices now, including mRNA vaccines
3. Use doctors' offices to offer “pop-up” vaccine locations in rural areas and in Winnipeg, including to target individuals at increased risk due to geography, occupation or other risk factors.

# Public Preference vs. Vaccine Allocation

**88%** of Manitobans prefer to get vaccine in doctor's office

**4%** of vaccine doses shared with doctors' offices



## Serious Concerns: Allocation Methodology

Physicians are very concerned about the methodology Manitoba Health has used to allocated AstraZeneca doses among “distributed channel” partners, including medical clinics and pharmacies.

Basing the allocation on how past year’s flu shot volumes is an inappropriate variable to use.

COVID-19 vaccines are new and they are for a new disease.

According to independent research into Manitobans’ views, doctors' offices are the preferred location for 88% of Manitobans, and nearly half of those hesitant about the vaccine are more likely to get the shot in a doctor’s office (Source: Probe Research Poll)

**Vaccine appointment  
availability among participating  
medical clinics and pharmacies**

**Vaccine appointments available at**

**17%**

**of  
medical clinics**

**75%**

**of  
pharmacies**

Source: Manitoba Government Vaccine Finder  
Date: April 19, 2021

# Improving vaccine distribution to medical clinics

# Leveraging Clinics to Expand Vaccine Reach

With nearly 200 doctors' offices participating, different medical clinics have capacity to contribute to the vaccine rollout in different ways:

1

## Focus on Existing Patients



Some clinics only have capacity to focus on their own patients with some public appointments integrated into their clinic schedule.

2

## Large Public Vaccine Clinics



Some clinics have capacity to offer high-volume vaccine clinics. Blocks of time are held exclusively for immunizations.

3

## Clinic as Pop-Up Site



With locations in over 30 communities, doctors' offices can serve as scheduled “pop-up” vaccine clinics, a cost effective alternative to government-run pop-ups.

## Shifting to a regular order / delivery cycle

A weekly “pull” ordering system has been proposed by provincial officials to address concerns raised during the initial shipments of vaccine doses to medical clinics and pharmacies.

During the initial vaccine shipments, a “push” delivery system was used and some clinics received more doses than expected while others received no doses at all.

The weekly ordering system would enable participating locations to place an order for vaccine doses based on their plans and capacity for the upcoming week.

Doctors Manitoba engaged all participating medical clinics to understand how a weekly “pull” ordering system could be optimized to support fast vaccine delivery and administration.

# How to optimize a weekly ordering system?



Lead time in ordering would help. One week between order and delivery is preferred, but less time can work.

Deliveries on Fridays or Mondays preferred, but any day can be arranged ***with notice.***

With a predictable order and delivery system in place, vaccines could be used within the week.



# Medical clinic response to proposed change

Medical clinics indicated they would prefer a weekly “pull” ordering system. This would allow them to meet patient and public demand for the vaccine in a more predictable way.

Medical clinics would support the change to a “pull” ordering system, but **physicians have serious concerns about how it would work:**

- **The system has to deliver.** Based on the vaccine delivery experience so far, physicians were worried about the reliability of a weekly system. If they order a vaccine doses, they need to know how many they will receive and when so they can plan patient care.
- **The system has to be fair.** If vaccine orders outstrip the available supply, an equitable and transparent allocation method is needed to share the limited vaccine doses available.

# Doctors' Offices Can Use Vaccine Quickly

## Province's Current Vaccine Delivery System Causes Delays

Under the existing delivery system, clinics had little to no notice about the number of doses they'd receive or the timing of delivery.

Some clinics received unexpected "surprise" brownbag deliveries.

These unpredictable logistics meant clinics could only schedule appointments *after* doses were delivered.

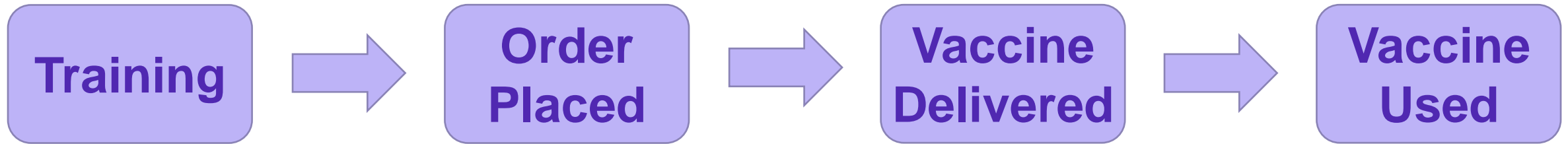
## Routine "Pull" Ordering System Will Enable Rapid Use of Vaccine Doses

With a predictable and reliable "pull" ordering system in place, medical clinics can:

- ✓ Use vaccine doses quickly
- ✓ Prioritize vaccine doses first to those most at risk

Clinics can report vaccination tallies more frequently.

# Weekly ordering system will enable safe use of mRNA vaccines in doctors' offices



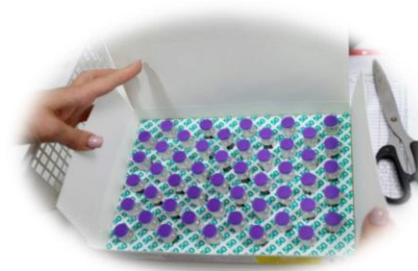
Compulsory training for participating clinics to ensure safe handling, storage and use of mRNA vaccines.



Ordering window enables supply chain coordination to align vaccine removal from freezer with scheduled vaccine use



Special trays have been developed to store and transport smaller supplies of the delicate mRNA vaccines

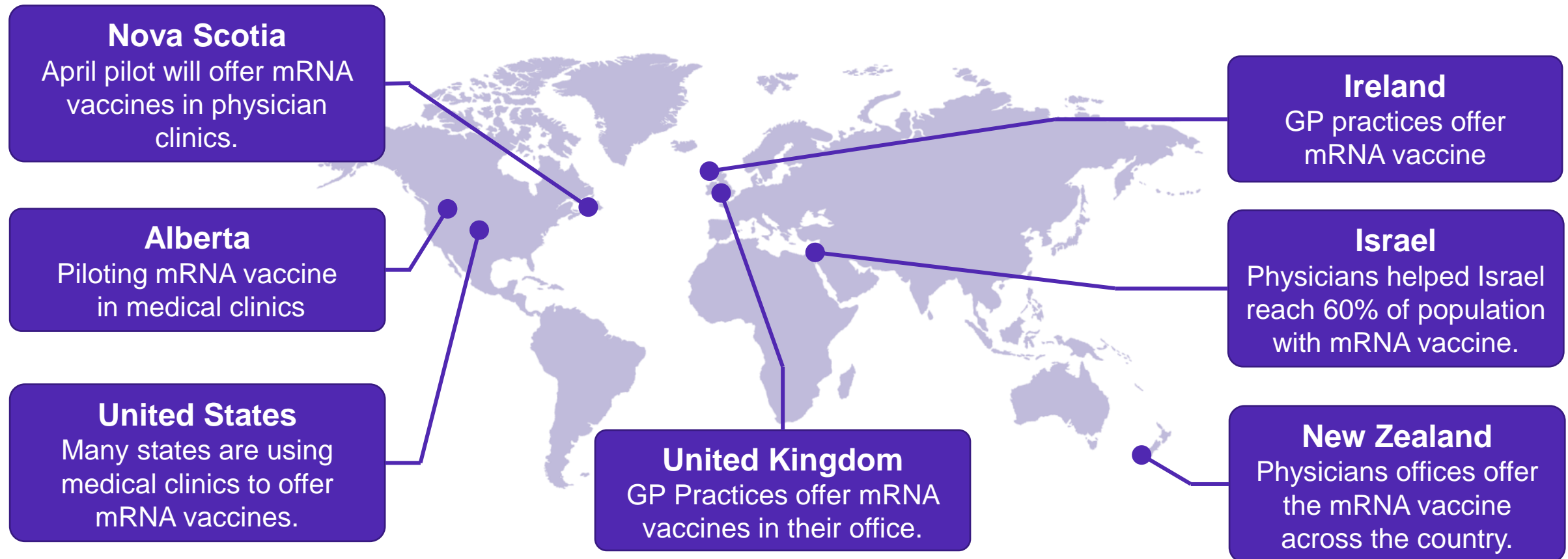


Coordinated delivery and scheduling will ensure doses can be used within 5 days of thawing, and within hours of being punctured.



# Doctors' offices already offer mRNA vaccines in multiple other jurisdictions

Other jurisdictions have found solutions to enable medical clinic delivery of mRNA vaccines. This includes logistics coordination, supply management, smaller vaccine trays, and more.



# Doctors' offices can offer 8,800 doses per day

Medical clinics can offer 1.5 to 2.5 times as many doses per day than the province has planned for. The limiting factor is vaccine supply.

## Provincial Planning



Planned for only 20 doses per day

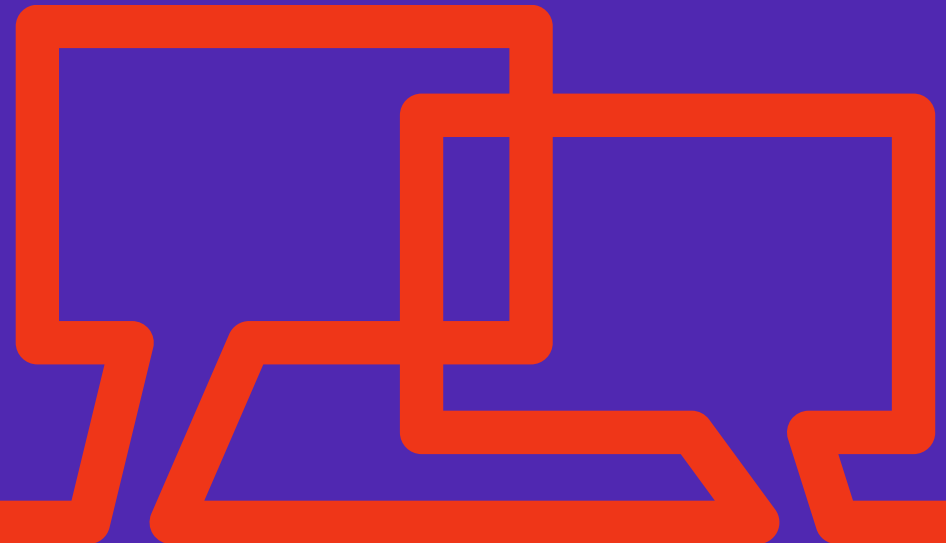
## Medical Clinic Capacity



Clinics have capacity to offer 30-51 doses per day

# Questions?

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