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NEWS RELEASE

## NIA Launches New Resources to Support Respiratory Health for Older Canadians During Cold and Flu Season

**TORONTO, Thursday, November 21** — With cold and flu season upon us, the National Institute on Ageing (NIA) is introducing a series of resources designed to help older adults make informed choices about recommended immunizations to protect them from respiratory and other diseases. These resources include practical guides and reports aimed at closing critical gaps in preventative health measures for older adults who are the most vulnerable to severe disease outcomes.

Among the new releases is the NIA's fully updated [Guide to Vaccines for Older Canadians](#), a comprehensive resource tailored for older adults looking to stay healthy throughout the fall and winter months and beyond. The Guide covers the importance of vaccines in enabling healthy ageing and provides details on vaccines for COVID-19, Influenza, RSV, Pneumococcal (Pneumonia), Shingles, Tetanus and Diphtheria, including the most recent recommendations from the Public Health Agency of Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI). Furthermore, this updated Guide will be available in 18 languages over the coming weeks.

In addition, the NIA brings attention to one of Canada's top killers, pneumonia with its updated report [As One of Canada's Top Killers, Why Isn't Pneumonia Taken More Seriously?](#) This report calls for urgent action to improve awareness, prevention, and vaccination rates to combat pneumonia and pneumococcal disease across the country. The report sheds light on Canada's long-standing struggle to meet vaccination targets. Despite the Public Health Agency of Canada's (PHAC) goal of achieving 80% pneumococcal vaccination coverage for adults 65 and older, only 54.7% of this group had received the vaccine by 2023.

Furthermore, the NIA's report, [Addressing the Significant Impact of RSV Infections among Older Canadians. It's Time for Action](#), underscores the need for improved awareness and access to RSV vaccines for older adults. While several provinces, including Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Québec, now provide public

coverage of the RSV vaccine Abrysvo for specific groups of older adults, much more work is needed to ensure that older Canadians understand and easily access RSV vaccines.

"Vaccination remains the most effective way for older adults to protect themselves from Influenza, Pneumonia, and other respiratory illnesses that can have devastating effects on their overall health and independence," said Dr. Samir Sinha, Director of Health Policy Research of the NIA. "Our resources are here to empower older adults with the information they need to make proactive choices that help them stay healthy, active, and confident."

The NIA is calling on Canadians, health care providers, and policymakers to take action and increase influenza and other vaccination rates among older adults. When looking at strategies to [Improve Vaccination Rates Against Influenza and Other Respiratory Illnesses Among Older Adults](#), the NIA recently demonstrated that older adults are most likely to get vaccinated when convenient and accessible options encourage uptake. Of older adults who reported getting vaccinated last cold and flu season, 59% received their flu shot at a pharmacy, 14% at a physician's office or medical clinic, and 14% at a community-based public health clinic.

"By working together, we can help older adults stay healthy and resilient throughout the current cold and flu season and beyond," said Alyssa Brierley, Executive Director of the NIA. "Health care providers and policymakers can promote vaccination and ensure accessible immunization options."

### **About The National Institute on Ageing**

The National Institute on Ageing (NIA) improves the lives of older adults and the systems that support them by convening stakeholders, conducting research, advancing policy solutions and practice innovations, sharing information and shifting attitudes. Our vision is a Canada where older adults feel valued, included, supported, and better prepared to age with confidence.

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