

Consent for immunization

Information for Health Care Providers

In Yukon, the [Care Consent Act](#) applies to people of all ages. That means anyone can consent to their own health care as long as they are capable of understanding and appreciating the consequences of that decision (s.6 (4) CCA). If a minor presents **with or without** parent/representative consent, it is **your professional responsibility as a health care provider** to assess their ability to consent and inform them about their right to provide consent on their own behalf despite the consent or refusal to consent by the parents.

As a health care provider, you determine the capability of the individual **throughout the appointment**, which includes cognitive functioning, hearing and language barriers. If at any point you feel that the client could not be deemed capable of consenting, you can pause and suggest that the parent/guardian be involved in the decision. (e.g., “This can be a lot to take in. We need to have your parent/guardian involved in the decision”).

How does consent work?

Any person under the age of 19 who is capable of providing informed consent to their own health care has the authority to give, refuse, or revoke consent for their own immunizations. They can also determine who can access their immunization records.

Consent is based on capacity, not age, but adolescents do have varying levels of capability. A minor is considered capable of providing informed consent to their own health care if they demonstrate the ability to understand the benefits of vaccination, the risks of not getting a vaccines, and other standard information.

IT IS YOUR PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO ASSESS THEIR ABILITY TO CONSENT AND INFORM THEM ABOUT THEIR RIGHT TO PROVIDE CONSENT ON THEIR OWN BEHALF.

A CONSENT IS EFFECTIVE FOR THE LENGTH OF THE SERIES CONSENTED TO, UNLESS REVOKED.

A REFUSAL TO CONSENT IS EFFECTIVE UNTIL REVOKED.

Additional Resources

- [Yukon Immunization Manual: Section 2 – Informed Consent](#)
- [BCCDC Mature Minor Informed Consent Video](#)



How to obtain informed consent for COVID-19 vaccines for 12-17 year olds?

This script is for Immunizers to follow when a minor presents at an Immunization Clinic requesting a COVID-19 vaccine without a parent/guardian. There are 7 steps to take to assess if a minor can provide informed consent to immunization:

1. **Determine authority** – Introduce yourself and determine if the client is interested in immunization.
 - “Hello, my name is [name]. I am a [professional designation] and I will be giving you some information about the COVID-19 vaccine and asking you some questions. Before we begin, do you have any questions? Feel free to ask me questions at any time during our conversation.”
 - “Did you discuss getting the COVID-19 vaccine with your parent or guardian? If yes, what did they say?” If no, encourage client to talk with a parent or guardian about their wishes and their decision.
 - “For us to get consent to give you the COVID vaccine, I’ll need to go over a few things with you. Is that ok?”

NOTE: It is the professional’s responsibility to inform the minor of their right to provide consent on their own behalf.

2. **Determine capability** by communicating with the client in a way they can understand and that considers any barriers.
 - Assess language, communication methods, hearing, cognitive abilities
 - Use clinical judgement. If the minor does not appear to be able to provide informed consent, consider phoning the parent or guardian for verbal consent so the minor is not denied an immunization opportunity.

3. **Provide standard information** on the vaccine by reviewing the [COVID-19 mRNA Info Sheet](#).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “I am going to review a few pieces of information about the COVID-19 vaccine so you are fully aware of what to expect. Feel free to ask any questions.” ○ Vaccine process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The vaccine is injected into the muscle in your upper arm and you will need a second injection in about 3 weeks to be fully protected.” ○ Vaccine protection against illness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The vaccine is 100% effective at preventing people your age from getting sick with COVID-19. It also almost completely protects you from being hospitalized or dying from COVID-19, even though that is rare for people your age.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Benefits on a personal and community level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Vaccination is the best way to protect you and others. Getting vaccinated also lowers the risk of spreading COVID-19. By getting the vaccine, you are helping protect everyone around you.” ○ Eligibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The COVID-19 vaccine is available for your age group. We recommend that you get it even if you have had COVID-19 because you may not be immune to the virus and could get sick again.”
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- **Common side effects**

- “You cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine but you may have a reaction. Common reactions include soreness, redness, swelling and itchiness where the vaccine was given. Other reactions may include tiredness, headache, fever, chills, muscle soreness, swollen lymph nodes under the armpit, nausea, and vomiting. These are mild and should only last 1 or 2 days.”

- **Risks of not getting immunized**

- “Without getting vaccinated, you will be at risk for getting sick from the COVID-19 virus. Even if you don’t get very sick, you are also at risk of spreading it to others in who may get very sick or die.”

- **Small but important risk of anaphylaxis**

- “Very rarely, people can have a severe allergic reaction to the vaccine. This only happens in about 1 in 100,000 people. This is why you will need to wait for 15 minutes after the vaccine – to make sure you don’t have any reactions. If you do, we can treat you right away. If you have a severe allergic reaction after leaving, call 9-1-1 right away.”

- **Screen for contraindications**

- “Do you have any allergies?”

4. **Confirm understanding** of standard information

- Assess non-verbal cues
- Clarify reasons for silence or refusal to engage in discussion if present
- Ask questions to confirm understanding if uncertain
- “Before we go ahead, I need to make sure you understand what we discussed. Is that ok?”
Ask questions such as:
 - What are some common side effects to the COVID-19 vaccine?
 - What are some benefits to the COVID-19 vaccine?
 - Why do we have people wait for 15 minutes after vaccination?
 - How many doses of the COVID-19 vaccine are required?

5. **Provide opportunity to ask questions**

- Ask, “Do you have any questions?”

6. **Confirm consent**

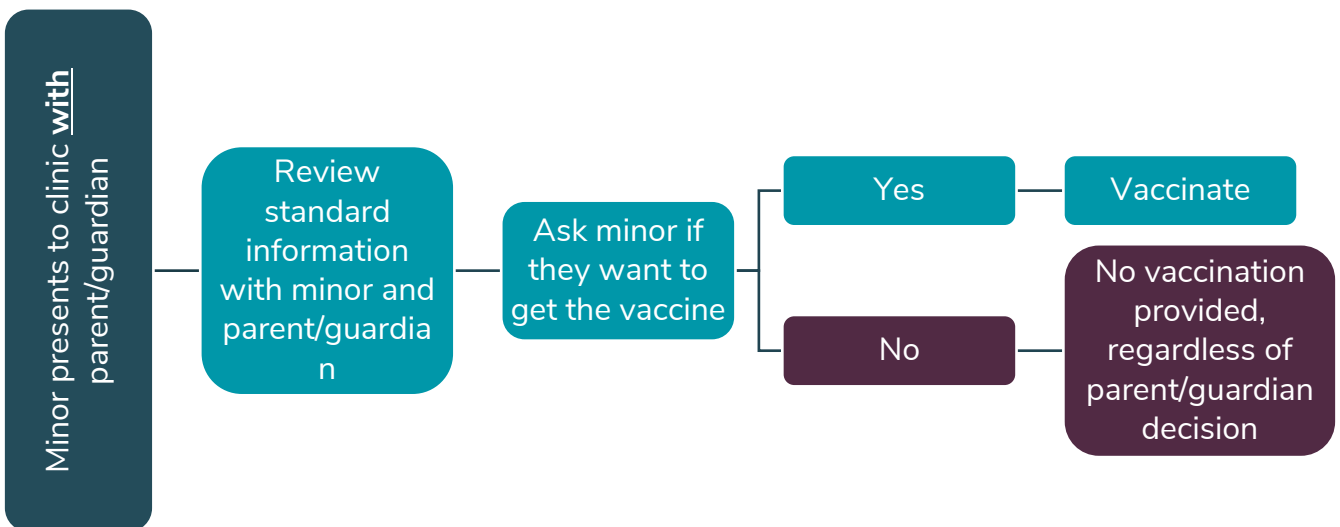
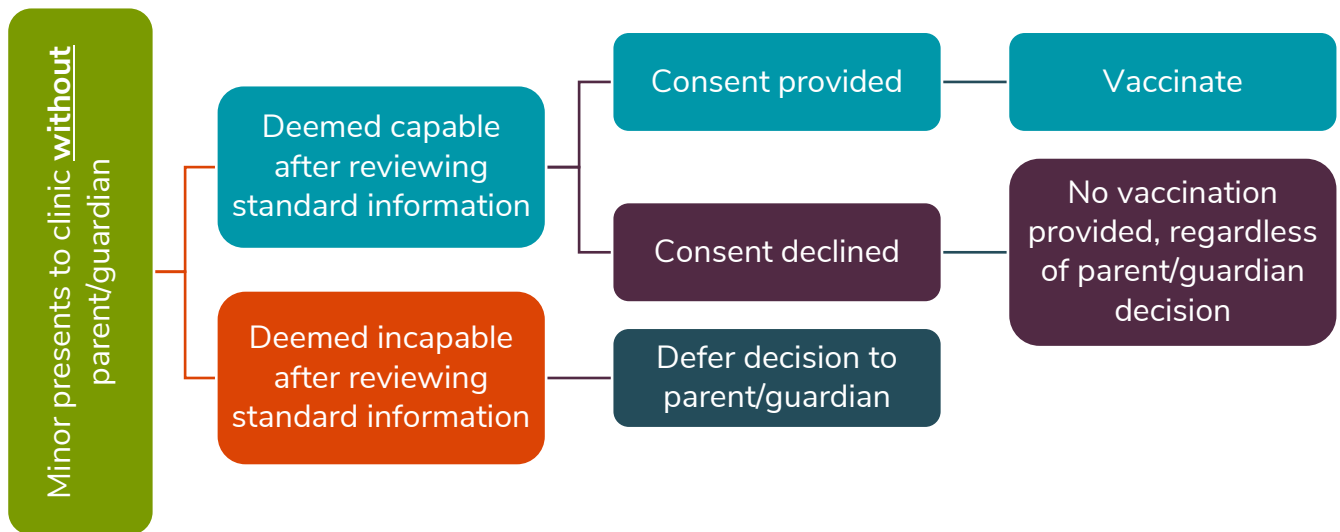
- Ask, “Are you ready to get your vaccine?”

7. **Document** consent or refusal in Panorama.

- When a minor consents to immunization, document this in the comments box in Panorama when you **record consent**
 - Clearly identify if consent was given by the minor and include a statement of the assessment of capacity (e.g., “The client is able to appreciate and understand the consequences of their decision”).



APPENDIX A: MINOR CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT GENERAL PROCESS FLOW



APPENDIX B: CHECKLIST FOR OBTAINING MINOR CONSENT FOR VACCINATION

<p>In Yukon, the Care Consent Act applies to people of all ages. That means anyone can consent to their own health care as long as they are capable of understanding and appreciating the consequences of that decision (s.6 (4) CCA). If a minor presents with or without parent/representative consent, it is your professional responsibility as a health care provider to assess their ability to consent and inform them about their right to provide consent on their own behalf despite the consent or refusal to consent by the parents.</p>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DETERMINE AUTHORITY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Determine authority – Introduce yourself and determine if the client is interested in immunization.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ASSESS CAPABILITY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assess: language, communication methods, hearing, cognitive abilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use clinical judgement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If child does not appear to be able to provide informed minor consent, consider phoning parent/guardian for verbal consent so child is not denied an immunization opportunity
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROVIDE STANDARD INFORMATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent is obtained for a vaccine series <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provide time for review of COVID-19 mRNA vaccine information sheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vaccine protects against COVID-19 illness ○ Benefits, personal and community ○ Risk if unvaccinated ○ Common side effects ○ Small but important risk of anaphylaxis ○ Screen for contraindications (anaphylaxis to previous dose of COVID-19 vaccine or any components in vaccine)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CONFIRM UNDERSTANDING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assess non-verbal cues <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clarify reasons for silence or refusal to engage in discussion if present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ask questions to confirm understanding if uncertain
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ask “do you have any questions?”
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CONFIRM CONSENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ask, “are you ready to proceed?”
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DOCUMENT CONSENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Document consent or refusal in Panorama. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If minor consents to immunization, document this in the comments box in Panorama when you record consent ○ Clearly identify if consent was given by the minor and include a statement on the assessment of capacity

