

COVID-19 Update

For more information:
Canada.ca/coronavirus

Information for Indigenous communities:
Canada.ca/coronavirus-info-indigenous



INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA – Ontario Region

January 2021

We hope you and your community members had a safe, healthy and happy holiday season. Since we last met, Ontario moved into a province-wide lockdown, as the Province tries to curb rising COVID-19 case numbers and spare hospitals and their intensive care units from being inundated. It is now more important than ever to reiterate to your community the importance of following public guidelines and procedures.

Health Canada has now approved the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines for use in Canada. The rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine is an unprecedented effort that will require the collaboration of multiple organizations that provide services to Indigenous communities in Ontario, including Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).

The distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine in Ontario is happening in stages as outlined below. The goal is to make the vaccine available to everyone in Ontario, including those in Indigenous communities, as soon as enough doses are available from manufacturers.

As much as possible, please encourage your community members to get the COVID-19 vaccine in order to protect themselves, their families and your community. The COVID-19 vaccine will also be an important step to safely resume normal life.

At a time when misinformation is so freely available and widely spread, we hope this sixth monthly COVID-19 update provides factual and accessible communications that can be used within your communities and assist in clarifying some misinformation regarding the vaccine.

Garry Best, Regional Executive and Anne Scotton, Regional Director General

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

On December 23, 2020, Health Canada authorized the [Moderna](#) vaccine for use in Canada to prevent COVID-19 in people 18 years and older. This transportation and storage requirements of this vaccine are less stringent than those of the Pfizer vaccine, making it more suitable for use in remote communities. Evidence shows the vaccine is safe, effective and good quality.

COVID-19 Vaccines for Ontario

10,350 Daily doses administered

60,380 Total doses administered

Status: All data reflects total from 8 p.m. the previous day

Working with Partners

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Ontario region is working with partners including community leadership, the Province, public health units, along with Indigenous health authorities and service organizations, to: recruit additional health care providers and support staff; offer training to educate community health nurses about the new vaccines and ensure they are certified to administer the vaccines; assist with community-led vaccination planning; and provide factual and accessible communications that can be used within communities.

“COVIDZero” approach

First Nations in Ontario have been incredibly successful at preventing the spread of COVID-19, aiming at a “COVIDZero”-type approach, and it is critical to continue these efforts given the provincial situation and increasing cases that we are now seeing in communities. More communities are seeing their first cases of COVID-19 as well. The rapid response of communities has limited spread when cases have occurred. As we look forward to the vaccine rollouts, we must all be vigilant in prevention and response efforts and ISC is committed to supporting communities through funding of their public health activities. We continue to accept funding proposals to support those activities.

Getting the vaccine

The Province of Ontario has started to roll out its three-phased vaccine distribution implementation plan.

Phase 1

Starting December 15, 2020, limited doses of the vaccine have been made available for health care workers in hospitals, long-term care homes and retirement homes, other congregate care settings and remote Indigenous communities.

Phase 2

Starting this winter, there will be an increasing stock of vaccines, available to all health care workers, residents in long-term care homes, retirement homes, home care patients with chronic conditions and additional Indigenous communities.

Phase 3

When vaccines and doses are available, vaccines will be widely accessible across Ontario for anyone who would like to be immunized.

COVID-19 Vaccination Survey

A reminder to please select one appropriate person (pandemic lead/nurse in charge/health director) from the community to complete [this survey](#)

Health Canada warning – Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Health Canada has issued a recall warning regarding unauthorized PPE that are manufactured and sold by Maksopia (formally known as Medken Canada Inc.). The company is selling gowns, masks and gloves through social media and online marketing sites without the required Medical Device License from Health Canada.

Anyone who has bought PPEs from this company should stop using the equipment **immediately** and notify Health Canada through their [reporting page](#).

Genetic Variant of COVID-19

The Government of Canada is closely monitoring the [genetic variant of the COVID-19 virus](#) that was recently identified in the United Kingdom, and has now been found in Ontario and other parts of Canada. While early findings indicate this new variation could be more transmissible, right now there is no evidence that it causes a more severe disease or has any impact on antibody response or vaccine effectiveness.

Nursing retention and recruitment

Nurses continue to respond to primary health care, emergent, and urgent health needs as well as the demands placed on the health system by COVID-19. All health care facilities remain open and operational. Continued activities are underway to recruit and retain qualified nurses for both full time, part time, and surge positions.

We are also offering enhanced training regarding COVID-19 response, infection control, personal protective equipment, and immunization.

Let's flatten the infodemic curve - World Health Organization

We are all being exposed to a huge amount of COVID-19 information on a daily basis, and not all of it is reliable. Please find below some tips for telling the difference and stopping the spread of misinformation. Here are seven steps you can take to navigate this wave of information and decide who and what to trust:

- 1. Assess the source:** Who shared the information with you and where did they get it from? Even if it is friends or family, you still need to vet their source. To check for fake social media accounts, look at how long profiles have been active, their number of followers and their most recent posts.
- 2. Go beyond headlines:** Headlines may be intentionally sensational or provocative to get high numbers of clicks. Read more than just the headline of an article – go further and look at the entire story
- 3. Identify the author:** Search the author's name online to see if they are real or credible.
- 4. Check the date:** When you come across information, ask yourself these questions: Is this a recent story? Is it up to date and relevant to current events? Has a headline, image or statistic been used out of context?
- 5. Examine the supporting evidence:** Verify that experts are reliable and that links actually support the story.
- 6. Check your biases:** Evaluate your own biases and why you may have been drawn to a particular headline or story.
- 7. Turn to fact-checkers:** When in doubt, consult trusted fact-checking organizations, such as the International Fact-Checking Network and global news outlets focused on debunking misinformation.

COVID-19 Cases

*As of January 6, 2021, @ 6:00 p.m.

279 confirmed in-community	2 deaths
36 active cases	241 resolved (86%)

Please visit our [Portal](#) for more information regarding COVID-19



Please feel free to contact the FNIHB Ontario COVID-19 generic inbox: sac.covid-19fnihbontario.isc@canada.ca if you or your community member have any information needs.