

COVID-19 Update

For more information:
Canada.ca/coronavirus

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



INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA – Ontario Region November 2020

November is upon us and so too, is the second wave of COVID-19. The recent surge in cases in Ontario is a sign that we are in for a long and challenging winter season. As we enter the ninth month of this pandemic, we are all suffering from COVID-19 fatigue and the choices that we make during these difficult times will determine how long we will need to continue to endure it. With that in mind, we encourage you to reiterate to your community members, especially those in the younger demographic, the need to stay vigilant and to keep following public guidelines and procedures. We hope that this third monthly COVID-19 Update will provide you with information that will assist you in continuing to keep your communities healthy and safe. ISC will continue to be here for you and to help you and your community through the next, and likely, the most difficult period so far of this pandemic.

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

Lessons Learned

There has been an increase in cases related to gatherings and parties so it continues to be imperative that we all keep our contacts to a minimum. COVID-19 takes those opportunities to spread, and can result in hundreds of people being isolated in a short period of time. In some people, the symptoms have been so mild that they thought, “It can’t be COVID-19,” and they were very surprised to test positive. Please continue to encourage residents to get tested and to self-isolate when they have symptoms.

Testing

The Province of Ontario received an initial shipment of rapid, point-of-care tests and is currently validating these new test methods. The Province is in the process of creating an implementation plan to support the use of these tests, beginning in areas that have increased turnaround times for results. Over the coming weeks, we will be learning more about the roll-out of these tests, including the necessary requirements for training, quality assurance, as well as reporting into the provincial public health system to support the use of these tests in First Nations communities.

Needs-based COVID-19 Funding

The Ontario Region is accepting funding requests under the following streams: Indigenous Community Support Fund, Indigenous Community Business Fund, and Public Health Measures.

Click [here](#) for the needs-based funding application for the Indigenous Community Support Fund. Deadline to apply is November 30, 2020.

Requests for funding under the Public Health Measures should be directed to the generic [COVID-19 inbox](#).

Requests for funding under Indigenous Community Business Fund should be directed to the [Lands and Economic \(LED\) Ontario inbox](#).

For more information on the COVID-19 funding streams currently accepting needs-based requests, please see the attached table in the November 5, 2020, meeting scheduler.

COVID-19 Funding Allocated To-Date

Since March 1, 2020, and as of October 30, 2020, \$318.3M has been made available to Ontario Region First Nations and Indigenous organizations to support COVID-19 response efforts, and \$263.7M to provide additional supports for children and families, for a total of \$582.0M.



On October 30, 2020, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced an additional \$204 million targeted at child care, education and infrastructure to help Indigenous communities fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Click [here](#) for more information.

Nursing retention and recruitment

ISC recognizes the challenges faced by First Nations communities as a result of COVID-19 and is closely monitoring the need for primary health care resources. Going into the end of the calendar year, nursing staffing in isolated and remote communities is fragile. To this point, nursing stations have been staffed on a four week rotation, including two weeks of self-isolation prior to deployment. In order to best support the nurses and the facilities staffing needs, we are planning nursing charters every two weeks when needed. Infection prevention protocols for these nurses will not change.

Interdisciplinary health care teams continue to be developed, where available, including community paramedics, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, and registered practical nurses.

ISC is making changes in the staffing of the recruitment and retention team in order to enhance efforts to recruit and retain qualified primary care staff and will continue to work with you and your community to ensure that you have the nursing resources you need.

Resources

Click [here](#) for some COVID-19 communications resources to assist you with delivering messages to your community members.

The Community Guide to Creating Space for COVID contains information about creating space for COVID-19 related needs in your community, as well as how to submit a proposal to ISC for additional public health supports related to these spaces. Click [here](#) to access the guide.

Click [here](#) for a comprehensive summary of available support for Indigenous peoples during COVID-19.

Awards of Excellence in Nursing

Each year, ISC recognizes the exceptional health care work that frontline nurses provide to First Nations and Inuit communities. This year, we are happy to share that two of the three recipients are from Ontario.

Brenda Moodie is an Anishinabek nurse from Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. She is a strong advocate for her clients ensuring they receive quality care while maintaining their dignity and their freedom of choice in their health and wellness journey.

Deborah Lynn Whitney-Hambleton was a respected and admired ISC-employed nurse who believed in merging Western medicine with Indigenous traditional healing practices. Although Deborah has sadly passed away, her legacy lives on in the patients she diligently cared for, the family and friends she loved and the work to which she dedicated her life.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Reminder: Online Flu Resources

In the October COVID-19 Update, we provided you with some resources to remind your community members about the importance of getting a flu shot. With the surge in COVID-19 cases in Ontario and in an effort to assist you with continuing to raise awareness about the flu and the importance of getting a flu shot, here are the links to those resources:

[ISC's seasonal flu page](#) ***NEW** [Flu resource for seniors](#)
[Flu fact sheet](#) ***NEW** [Flu resource for families](#)

COVID-19 Cases

*As of November 2, 2020, @ 3:00 p.m.

159	confirmed in-community	2	deaths
11	active cases	146	resolved (92%)

