

## ISC-AB Vaccine Update March 15, 2022

### General Updates:

- The number of active cases, on reserve and across Alberta, have dropped recently.
- As of March 13, there are approximately 6,640 active cases in Alberta; 986 individuals are in hospital (73 in ICU). As there may be more cases identified through take-home rapid antigen tests as well as unconfirmed/asymptomatic cases, the actual case count in the province is likely much higher. It is likely that more individuals have been infected with the Omicron variant during the most recent wave than has been officially recorded.
- As of March 14, there have been 19,229 probable and confirmed on-reserve cases of COVID-19. Of these total cases – 18,797 have recovered and 262 are active cases in 36 First Nation communities; 10 communities have 10 or more active cases. There are 23 individuals in hospital (three in ICU) and, sadly, 169, individuals have passed away.
- As of March 13 – 8,536,856 immunizations have been administered in Alberta, with approximately 90.1% of the population age 12 and older having received at least one dose (80.9% of the total population) and approximately 86.6% having received two doses (76.2% of the total population).
- As mentioned at previous vaccine updates, ISC-AB uses Indian Registry data for the population age 12 and older living on reserve as the denominator. The numerator consists of all the doses administered on reserve and doses reconciled through the provincial registry using RTI. The doses administered on reserve would also include individuals not residing on reserve, etc.
- As of March 14 – 119,908 immunizations have been administered in First Nation communities in Alberta, with approximately 59,774 first doses, 49,116 second doses, 11,018 third doses, and 45 fourth doses. Approximately, 88.6% of the population age 12 and older living on reserve have received at least one dose (74.7% of the total population), 75.5% have received at least two doses (61.4% of the total population), and 17.3% have received three doses (13.8% of the total population).
- ISC-AB has noted a slight decrease in the number of overall doses being administered, although vaccine coverage for third doses among older populations (who may be more vulnerable) is promising. Recently, the province has focused on vaccine coverage for pediatric first doses.
- Regarding non mRNA vaccine clinical trials:
  - Novavax Nuvaxovid: The vaccine is approved for people who are 18 years of age and older. Clinical trials showed that, beginning one week after the second dose, Novavax ([COVID-19 protein subunit vaccine](#)) was 90% effective in protecting trial participants aged 18 and above against COVID-19.
  - Medicago Covifenz: The vaccine is approved for people who are 18 to 64 years of age. Clinical trials showed that, beginning one week after the second dose, Medicago ([COVID-19 plant based virus-like particle vaccine](#)) was 71% effective in protecting trial participants aged 18 to 64 against COVID-19.
  - Novavax and Medicago trials were not done with the Omicron variant. These vaccines may help improve vaccine coverage for adults.

## Vaccine Clinic Update:

- AHS COVID-19 Biological Pages were revised March 11, and Health Directors can expect an email with more information from Brent Whittal shortly. Highlights include:
  - Table on interval between infection and immunization (applies to everyone in Alberta):
    - For individuals who have not had any previous doses, they may receive their first dose after acute symptoms of COVID-19 have resolved and they are no longer infectious, or they may follow these suggested intervals (with the exception of those with Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) who should wait at least 90 days).
    - Infection prior to initiation or completion of a primary COVID-19 immunization series:
      - Individuals without certain immunocompromising conditions and no history of MIS-C may receive the vaccine does eight weeks after symptom onset or positive test (if asymptomatic).
      - Individuals with certain immunocompromising conditions and no history of MIS-C may receive the vaccine four to eight weeks after symptom onset or positive test (if asymptomatic).
      - Individuals with history of MIS-C (regardless of immunocompromised status) may receive the vaccine when clinical recovery has been achieved or at least 90 days since the onset of MIS-C, whichever is longer.
  - As of March 14, youth aged 12 to 17 in Alberta can receive a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine at a minimum of five month interval since their second dose (already applicable for First Nations).
  - There is evidence of a diminished immune response in individuals who are immunocompromised and those with auto-immune disorders who are receiving immunosuppressive therapy.
  - For vaccine recipients 12 + years of age, all mentions of not co-administering the COVID-19 vaccine with other vaccines (e.g., influenza) have been removed; COVID-19 vaccines can be administered at the same time as other immunizations.

## Questions:

- ***From Dr. Parminder Thiara: Can we agree to move this meeting to once a month (adding meeting if/when necessary based future developments)? Does anyone have any suggestions for vaccine uptake moving forward?***
  - Agreed – vaccine update will now be held once a month.
  - Suggestion: A town hall that involves all Treaty area/Elders from all communities would be very useful for reliable vaccine information and overall awareness.
- ***Are there any updates on COVID-19 Vaccines for children under 5?***
  - There is no information at this time on when to expect an announcement or roll out of vaccines for children under 5 years of age. Information is limited because

vaccine manufacturers appear to still be in the clinical trial phase/determining pediatric doses for children age 0-4 and they have not made their data public.

Thank you all for your continued hard work and dedication. We will meet again **April 12, 2022 at 1PM.**