

ISC Alberta Region Update for Chiefs

September 16, 2022

COVID Information

Alberta COVID Situation

According to the most recent provincial update on COVID-19, there has been an increase in both hospital and ICU admissions, and during the past week, there have been 16 deaths recorded provincially as a result of COVID-19. For PCR tests, the test positivity rate for the past week was 16.94 percent, up from 16.68 percent one week ago.

Hospitalizations for First Nations individuals in Alberta are relatively stable with four First Nations individuals in hospital this week, up slightly from two individuals hospitalized last week.

Moderna bivalent COVID-19 booster rollout for those 18+ beginning September 21

Starting September 21, individuals on reserve who are 18 years of age and older can access the Moderna Spikevax bivalent COVID-19 booster through community health centres, nursing stations or the Alberta Vaccine Booking System. Click [here](#) for further details.

Health Canada authorized the Moderna Spikevax bivalent COVID-19 vaccine on September 1. This vaccine targets the original SARS-CoV-2 virus from 2019 and the Omicron (BA.1) variant, and is authorized for use as a booster dose in individuals 18 years of age or older. This is the first bivalent COVID-19 vaccine authorized in Canada and marks a milestone in Canada's response to COVID-19. To learn more about the vaccine and the approval process, click [here](#).

Boosters available for children aged 5-11

As of August 29, children 5 to 11 years of age are eligible for a COVID-19 booster as recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) and the Alberta Advisory Committee on Immunization. The national and Alberta expert committees support booster doses for this age group, with a strong recommendation for children with immune-compromising conditions. Note that immune-compromised children are already eligible for a three-dose primary series, so their boosters will be fourth doses. Booster doses should ideally be offered at least five calendar months after completion of the primary series.

Children five to 11 years of age who live in First Nations communities can access a booster dose through community health centres or nursing stations. For information on how to book appointments off reserve, please click [here](#).

Rapid tests available from Alberta Health

To make a request for rapid tests, please email Alberta Health at rapidtesting@gov.ab.ca with the number of tests required. Orders will be processed and shipped as they are received. Reporting on usage to Alberta Health is not required.

back to school reminders:

- Vaccines are still the best way to combat the effects from the flu or COVID-19.
- Stay home if you're sick.
- Keep up good hand washing habits. Watch this [hand washing hero](#) video for tips!
- Use hand sanitizers when soap and water are not available.



COVID and Health Information continued

Monkeypox Update

Nationally, provinces and territories have publicly reported 1,338 cases of monkeypox as of September 14, 2022, with 34 of those cases being in Alberta. PHAC is continuing to collect and analyze epidemiological information reported by the provinces and territories.

There is a vaccine that is currently available in Alberta for monkeypox. Those who are eligible for pre-exposure vaccine, please dial 811 or contact your health centre to book an appointment. Details on eligibility can be found [here](#).

Monkeypox is usually a self-limited viral infection. Most people recover on their own after a few weeks. In some circumstances, people may become very sick and could die. People can develop symptoms such as fever, chills and later rashes, 5 to 21 days after being exposed to the monkeypox virus. You should call a health care provider immediately if:

- you develop symptoms of monkeypox
- you have had contact with a known or suspected monkeypox case.

Monkeypox is a rare disease that is caused by infection with the Monkeypox virus. The virus is related to the smallpox virus, but typically causes less serious symptoms.

- For information on the number of cases in Alberta, as well as other jurisdictions in Canada, please visit: [Monkeypox: Outbreak update - Canada.ca](#)
- To see the latest information from the Province of Alberta on Monkeypox, including symptoms, prevention and treatment, please visit: [Monkeypox virus | Alberta.ca](#)

Further reading:

- [Monkeypox: For health professionals - Canada.ca](#)
- [Monkeypox Resource Page - ScienceUpFirst](#)

September is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Month

- For details on this year's theme, events and resources, click [here](#).

Links and Resources

Science Up First

- [You should get your child vaccinated - ScienceUpFirst](#)
- [Vaccine hesitancy in parents - ScienceUpFirst](#)
- [Is the #Under5 vaccine effective? - ScienceUpFirst](#)
- [How does the COVID vaccine affect menstruation? - ScienceUpFirst](#)

Public Health Agency of Canada Posters - Vaccines for children

- [Get the facts: Vaccinating children against COVID-19 - Canada.ca](#)

Wastewater Monitoring

If you would like to observe current trends in wastewater data, please click [here](#). To view wastewater data from the University of Calgary, click [here](#).

Mark your calendar COVID-19 Telehealth Session - September 29

Please register for the session at: <http://WWW.FNTN.CA>

Resources for Air Quality Advisories and Wildfires

- [Health Information for Air Quality Events | Alberta Health Services](#)
- [Wildfire | AAF - Agriculture and Forestry \(alberta.ca\)](#)
- For additional information:
 - [FireSmoke Canada](#) - Canadian portal for information about wildland fire weather and smoke.
 - The Canadian Wildland Fire Information System (nrcan.gc.ca) (CWFIS) creates daily fire weather and fire behaviour maps.

Question of the Day

What do I need to know about the bivalent Moderna Spikevax vaccine?

The recently approved Moderna Spikevax booster, a bivalent vaccine, is a great development, as it will provide more robust protection against the Omicron variant. It targets both the original SARS-CoV-2 virus from 2019 and the Omicron (BA.1) variant.

Omicron variants, being highly contagious, impacted populations everywhere and resulted in 83 deaths on reserve. Omicron remains the dominant circulating strain in Alberta. The bivalent vaccine provides more robust protection from COVID-19 infection. It was developed to better match the currently circulating variants similar to how influenza vaccines are formulated to match what is believed to be the dominant strains in any upcoming influenza season.

Clinical trial results showed that a booster dose of the bivalent Moderna Spikevax vaccine triggers a strong immune response (much better than the original vaccine) against both Omicron (BA.1) and the original SARS-CoV-2 virus strain. It was also found to generate a good immune response against the Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants, and is expected to extend the durability of protection.

The Moderna Spikevax booster will be rolled out in Alberta on September 21, and will be available at health centres and nursing stations in First Nations communities.

For further reading, please consult the [Summary of NACI statement of September 1, 2022 \(PDF\)](#)

MoH Rx

Outpatient Treatments for COVID-19

Paxlovid - Health Canada has authorized the use of Paxlovid™ to treat mild to moderate COVID-19 infection confirmed by a COVID-19 test. Paxlovid™ is used to prevent symptoms from getting worse in people who have a high risk of hospitalization for COVID-19. Paxlovid™ is taken orally in pill form.

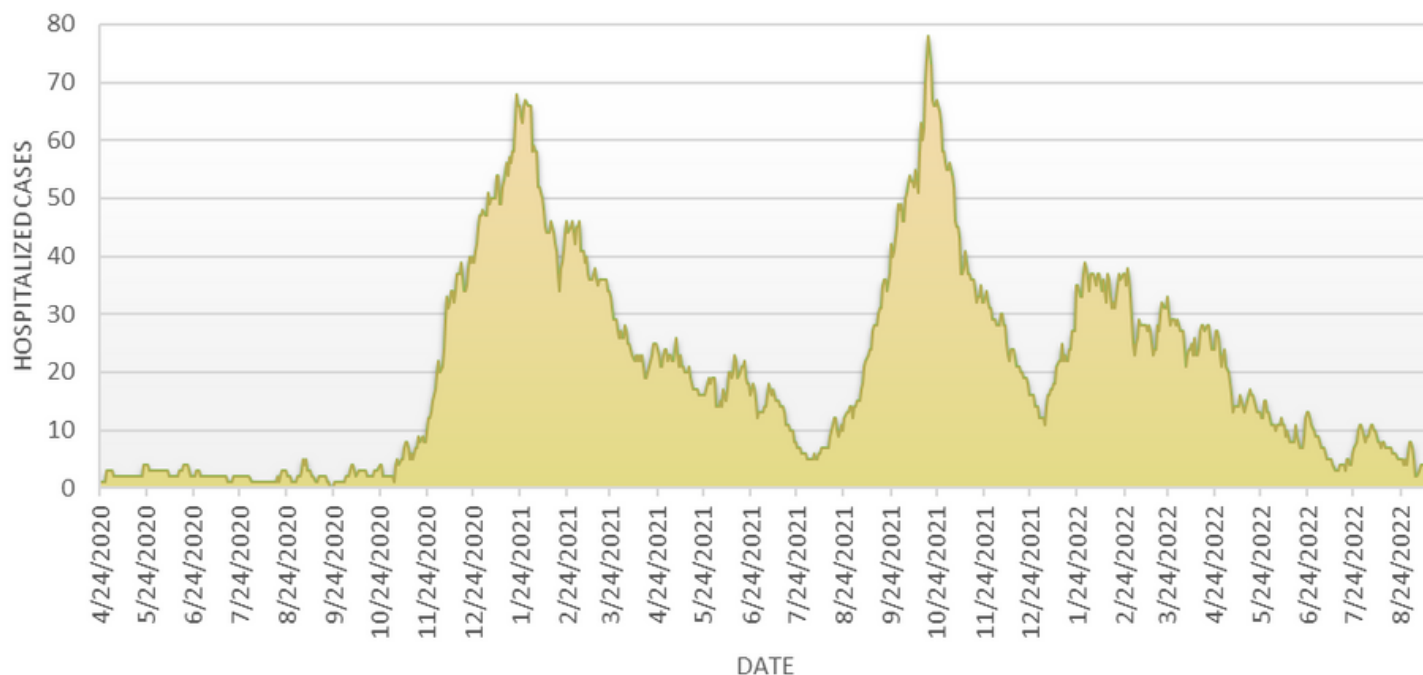
Remdesivir - Remdesivir is used in outpatients to treat mild to moderate COVID-19 that has been confirmed by a COVID-19 test. Remdesivir is used to prevent symptoms from getting worse in people who have a high risk of hospitalization for COVID-19. Remdesivir is also approved to treat individuals hospitalized due to COVID-19. Remdesivir is given intravenously (through a vein) by a qualified health professional.

Evusheld - Evusheld is a preventative measure, not a treatment, and is administered prior to infection with COVID-19. Evusheld is being offered to those who are **severely** immunocompromised, are unlikely to mount an adequate immune response to vaccination and have the highest demonstrated risk of severe outcomes from infection with COVID-19. A doctor can advise on eligibility to receive Evusheld.

To learn more about outpatient treatment for COVID-19, including the preventative measure Evusheld, and eligibility please click [here](#).

COVID-19 Epidemiological Data

Number of Current COVID-19 Cases from First Nations Communities in Hospital



Confirmed COVID-19 Cases in First Nations Communities in Alberta, September 13, 2022

Treaty Area	Total Cases	Hospitalizations Ever (includes incidental hospitalizations)	ICU* (includes incidental ICU admissions)	Currently in Hospital (includes incidental hospitalization)	Deaths
Total (First Nations Communities)	20,653	1,089	258	4	179
Treaty 6	9,289	444	101	1	71
Treaty 7	5,900	354	93	2	64
Treaty 8	5,464	291	64	1	44
Alberta^	604,578	29,829	4,318	819	4,848

*Each ICU admission is also included in the total number of hospitalizations

^Data are up-to-date as of end of day September 12, 2022

VACCINE SNAPSHOT



127,190 doses of vaccine have been administered in **46** Nations (bands) in Alberta.



At least **55.3%** of First Nations people aged 65 years and older living on-reserve or crown land have received **three doses** of the vaccine.



At least **20.2%** of First Nations people 12+ living on-reserve or crown land have received **three doses** of the vaccine.



At least **10.5%** of First Nations people aged 65 years and older living on-reserve or crown land have received **four doses** of the vaccine.



At least **89.1%** of First Nations people 12+ living on-reserve or crown land have received their **first dose** of the vaccine.

Additional Updates

From Indigenous Services Canada

Additional Income Assistance Inflation Relief Available

In light of the high inflation in Canada, as well as hardships that Income Assistance clients continue to face related to the pandemic, Indigenous Services Canada is providing an additional \$128.6 million in funding nationally to alleviate the rising costs of living under the Income Assistance program for 2022-2023. This one-time additional Income Assistance funding will help First Nations individuals and families who rely on income assistance to cover their essential living expenses during these uncertain times. The funding will be distributed to each First Nation Income Assistance program based on \$300 per Income Assistance family, for 4 months. However, this funding allows for full flexibility of the provision of funding to Income Assistance clients within the Income Assistance guidelines. Some options for eligible expenses include bulk food purchases, wage subsidies, purchase of appliances for Income Assistance clients and direct benefits to Income Assistance clients. Please reach out to your Nation's Social Development Officer, should you have any questions.

From the Government of Canada

Government of Canada supports projects across Canada to commemorate the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

On August 30, 2022, the Government of Canada announced investments totaling more than \$4 million to support **278 community projects all across the country** and two major national projects: a national commemorative gathering on September 30 for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and an educational program week for students in the country.

During Truth and Reconciliation Week, from September 26 to 29, a national educational program will be offered by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) to all students in grades 1 to 12 (secondary 5) in Canada. On September 30 at 1 p.m. ET, APTN, in partnership with the NCTR, will produce and broadcast a program live from LeBreton Flats Park in Ottawa as part of a national gathering to which everyone is invited. Remembering the Children: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation will be presented in honour of Survivors, their families and communities. It will air a second time later that evening during primetime on APTN channels.

For more information, including **funding recipients** as part of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, please visit the **full news release**.

Initiative launched to further support Indigenous master's students

On September 1, 2022, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, announced the launch of the **Indigenous Scholars Awards and Supplements Pilot Initiative** to provide financial support to Indigenous master's students in social science, humanities, natural science, and engineering programs. **Qualifying Indigenous applicants** will receive a \$17,500 award as well as a \$5,000 supplement as part of the current Canada Graduate Scholarships—Master's program offered by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC).

The deadline to apply is December 1, 2022. Results will be announced in April. For more information, please visit the full news release and **Indigenous Scholars Awards and Supplements Pilot Initiative**.

Additional Updates

From the Government of Alberta

Alberta Crime Prevention Grant

Eligible groups and organizations, including First Nations or Métis Settlements, working to prevent and reduce crime can now apply for the Alberta Crime Prevention grant to fund their projects and initiatives.

The \$5.2 million in grants available over the next two years will support the delivery of crime prevention, community safety and well-being programs. Programs may include initiatives or projects to reduce the risk of domestic violence, youth outreach programs, and training and staffing for crime prevention organizations in rural Alberta. An Alberta Crime Prevention grant provides one-time funding of \$25,000 to \$150,000 a year for projects and initiatives for up to two years. The application deadline is September 30, 2022.

To learn more, please visit: [Alberta crime prevention grant](#) | [Alberta.ca](#)

Community Policing Grant applications now open

Indigenous and municipal communities in Alberta can now apply for a one-time grant of up to \$30,000 to develop a business case for their own self-administered police service or regional equivalent. Click [here](#) to learn more.

