

# ISC Alberta Region Update for Chiefs

June 24, 2022

## COVID Information

### Post-COVID Condition or Long COVID

New studies are showing long-term effects of COVID-19 among individuals who were infected with SARS-CoV-2. Much of the current data indicates that 20% of adults and 25% of children with COVID-19 ended up with Long COVID.

The symptoms of Long COVID can be varied. While there are no clinics providing support for children with Long COVID, there are clinics for adults, but only with a referral. Patients should work with a doctor to secure a referral to access Alberta-based clinics. To learn more about recovering from COVID-19, Long COVID and Post-COVID condition, please click [here](#).

### Pfizer booster authorized for youth aged 16-17

On June 1, 2022, Health Canada authorized the use of a booster dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty COVID-19 vaccine in adolescents 16 to 17 years of age. A single booster dose of the Comirnaty vaccine may be administered at least 6 months after completion of a primary series to individuals 16 years of age and older, and is the same formulation and dosage strength as the doses in the primary series. Click [here](#) to learn more.

## An update from Indigenous Services Canada on Budget 2022

### Public Health Funding Update

ISC has received confirmation from Finance Canada that the \$268 million designated for public health care proposed in Budget 2022 will continue to support COVID public health measures in First Nations communities on reserve.

ISC-FNIHB will adopt a triaged, targeted, and needs based approach, which reflects the changing pandemic situation. The region will prioritize requests on a case-by-case basis, and will support requests demonstrating immediate needs including: any new COVID-19 outbreaks, continued vaccination and testing, and addressing urgent medical needs. Any health surge health infrastructure requests continue to require the review and support of CIAD (Headquarters).

Funding support will be moving to a shorter term duration (30 days), unless there is demonstrated case for support of a longer duration.

Further details on eligibility criteria will be communicated as soon as they are finalized.

### Indigenous Community Support Fund (ICSF) Update

Budget 2022 announced \$190.5M in new funding for the Indigenous Community Support Fund (ICSF). Funding has been available nationally for ICSF requests from April 1, 2022 for a maximum of 60 days. Within this period the eligibility for activities has been wound down and requests have been reviewed for ongoing eligible activities directly related to COVID-19 response. Further, any perimeter security funding requests are reviewed based on the maximum time period and to allow for adequate wind down and legal notice to staff. Nations are asked to ensure that any carry-over of ICSF4 funding continue to be used for eligible ICSF activities for this fiscal year. If an urgent outbreak situation arises, priority will be given to eligible activities that support the continuity of existing supports and urgent needs in response to COVID-19 for a short time period. A demonstrable link to COVID-19 must be present. Details on the federal budget for 2022 for any further funding and program implementation is expected in the coming weeks. ISC Alberta's COVID Funding team will continue to coordinate a joint approach to supporting requests. For further information, please contact the [CDE inbox](#) or your identified CLT.

## Question of the Day

*I've been seeing news stories about the spread of Monkeypox. What does my community need to know?*

Countries around the world including Canada are reporting clusters of Monkeypox. As of June 22, there were 210 cases of Monkeypox in Canada including four cases confirmed in Alberta. Monkeypox is a rare disease that can cause fevers, aches, fatigue and rashes. Monkeypox is spread through close contact with the rashes and secretions of people infected (bodily fluid and respiratory droplets). Items such as bedsheets used by people infected may be contaminated by the Monkeypox virus as well. While many cases identified so far in Canada are males who report having sexual relationships with other males, Monkeypox can spread outside of sexual relationships. Antiviral medication and vaccine are available in Alberta, so it is important to seek medical care if you are experiencing a new rash. For more information, please visit the **AHS website**.

## MoH Rx

### We can gather safely if we plan

On June 14, Alberta removed the last of its COVID-19 restrictions regarding mask-wearing and required isolation when infected with COVID-19. Based on wastewater data and hospitalizations, we know that the rate of infection for COVID-19 is declining, however it is still present and part of our lives, even as we move forward living with this disease. During the summer months there will be times when large gatherings may be happening within your communities such as Powwows or sporting events. There will also be large numbers of people travelling and gathering across the country when the Pope is in Canada to deliver his apology. Many of the people going to these events could be elders or other vulnerable members of your communities. While there are no longer any restrictions in place around mask wearing or gatherings, there is still risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19 when people come together in large numbers. Individual decisions can be made to reduce personal risk and mass gatherings can be done safely with proper planning. In fact, the more you prepare, the safer your gathering can be. Your Environmental Public Health Officers (EPHOs) are available to help with planning, logistics and messaging. Please reach out to them if they can be of assistance.

## Links and Resources

**Monkeypox in Alberta** - Telehealth Presentation, **July 7, 2022** at 1:30 pm. Register **here**.

**Recording** of June 9, 2022 COVID-19 MOH Update Telehealth Session - Click **here**

### Recovering from COVID-19 Resources

- **Poster - If You Have Had COVID-19: Long COVID**
- **Long COVID FAQs for Patients**
- **COVID-19 Getting Healthy After COVID-19**

### Wastewater Monitoring

If you like to observe current trends in wastewater data, please click **here**. To view wastewater data from the University of Calgary, click **here**.

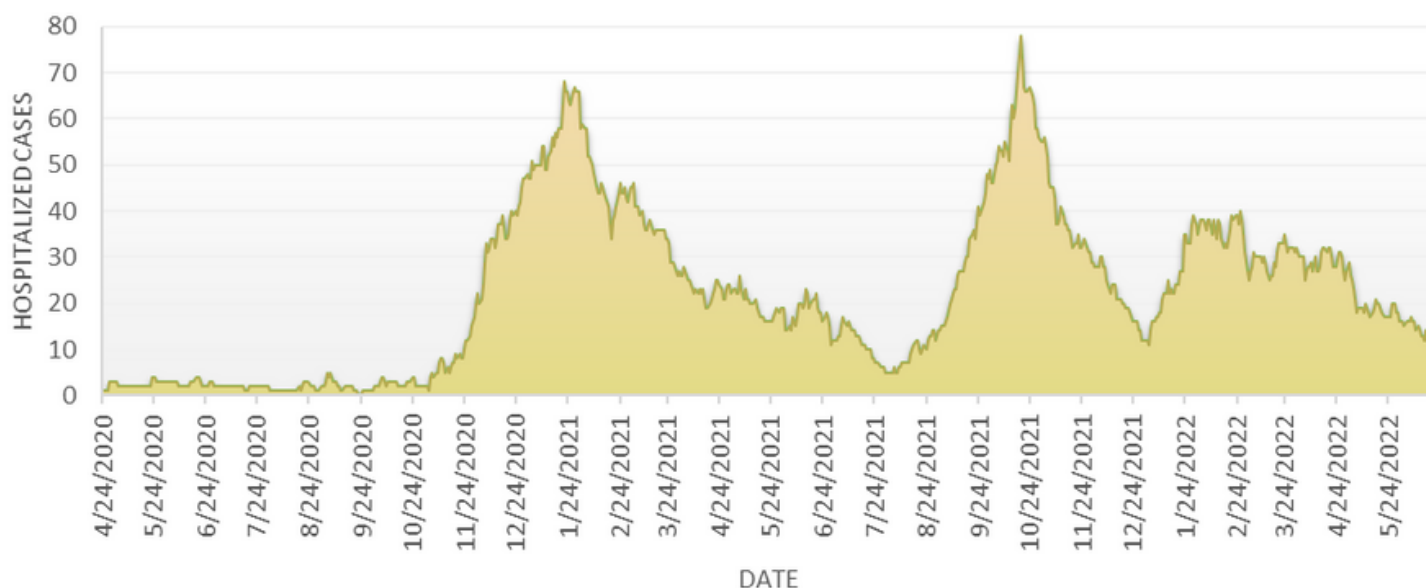
Communication resources for community health and safety - Digital toolkit - Update

For ease of use, the vaccine toolkit is now available on a new web page called **Communication resources for community health and safety**. We want to draw your attention to the following new resources:

- **Respecting personal choice poster**
- **Booster poster for nurses**
- **New links on booster doses**
- **New links about vaccines for children**
- **Updated "We're in this fight together" posters**

# 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, June 21, 2022

Treaty Area	Total Cases	Hospitalizations Ever (includes incidental hospitalizations)	ICU* (includes incidental ICU admissions)	Currently in Hospital (includes incidental hospitalization)	Deaths (includes incidental deaths)
Total (First Nations Communities)	20,301	1,044	250	10	185
Treaty 6	9,153	425	97	5	73
Treaty 7	5,733	334	91	4	71
Treaty 8	5,415	285	62	1	41
Alberta^	587,890	27,303	4,079	661	4,604

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

^Data are up-to-date as of end of day June 20, 2022

## VACCINE SNAPSHOT



**124,061** doses of vaccine have been administered in **46** Nations (bands) in Alberta.



At least **54.4%** of First Nations people aged 65 years and older living on-reserve or crown land have received **three doses** of the vaccine.



At least **7.8%** of First Nations people aged 65 years and older living on-reserve or crown land have received **four doses** of the vaccine.



At least **19.3%** of First Nations people 12+ living on-reserve or crown land have received **three doses** of the vaccine.



At least **88.3%** of First Nations people 12+ living on-reserve or crown land have received their **first dose** of the vaccine.



# Additional Updates

## Government of Canada

### **Independent Special Interlocutor to work with Indigenous communities on protection of unmarked graves and burial sites near former residential schools**

Starting June 14, 2022, Kimberly Murray, the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools, will work closely and collaboratively with Indigenous leaders, communities, Survivors, families and experts to identify needed measures to recommend a new federal legal framework to ensure the respectful and culturally appropriate treatment and protection of unmarked graves and burial sites of children at former residential schools.

In her capacity as Special Interlocutor, Ms. Murray will engage with First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments, representative organizations, communities, Survivors and families to discuss issues of concern around the identification, preservation, and protection of unmarked graves and burial sites, including the potential repatriation of remains.

This work will be carried out independently and impartially, in a non-partisan and transparent manner. The Special Interlocutor will deliver an interim report after the first year describing her work and progress to date. A final report will be delivered at the end of two years. Both interim and final reports will be delivered concurrently to the Minister of Justice and to First Nations, Métis and Inuit Survivors, families, leaders and communities, and to the public.

Click [here](#) to read more.

### **Government of Canada invests \$10 million to support mental health through the Canadian Red Cross**

Many community-based organizations providing mental health and well-being supports have faced a surge in demand and more complex needs resulting from the pandemic, while certain groups in Canada are more likely to face disproportionate challenges accessing mental health supports because of racism, discrimination, socio-economic status or social exclusion.

On June 16th the Public Health Agency of Canada announced \$10 million in funding to the Canadian Red Cross, who will act as an intermediary to distribute these funds to community-based organizations across the country working to promote mental health and well-being in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery through the Strengthening Community Capacity to Support Mental Health and Wellbeing: COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Grant Program. The funding will help equip community organizations and service providers to offer safe, culturally appropriate, responsive and effective programming and support for those whose mental health and well-being has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Click [here](#) to learn more about the program and application deadline.

### **Indigenous Support Line - AHS North Zone**

Indigenous Peoples in the North Zone of Alberta Health Services (AHS) now have a dedicated support line to help them better navigate the health system. The toll-free line can be reached by calling **1-844-944-4744**. The support line is staffed by Indigenous Health Link staff and is available weekdays from noon to 8 p.m. Staff will answer callers' questions, help them access culturally appropriate care and support and assist them with navigating the healthcare system. Clients can call at any time during their healthcare journey with questions or concerns – whether they are not currently receiving care, about to start care, in care, or discharged from care.

NOTE: All Albertans are asked to call 911 if they have a medical emergency. Health Link (811) also remains available 24/7 for non-emergency health-related questions.

Download the Indigenous Support Line poster [here](#).

# Additional Updates continued

## Indigenous Post-secondary programs

### Indigenous Practical Nursing program expanding

The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies Indigenous Practical Nursing is expanding its Indigenous Practical Nursing program to rural and remote locations. This program will focus on providing critical Indigenous Health Practitioners to First Nations communities. To learn more about the program, click [here](#).

### Indigenous Dental Therapy program launching at University of Saskatchewan

The University of Saskatchewan's College of Dentistry, together with the Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority (NITHA), Northlands College and Saskatchewan Polytechnic, are collaborating to establish the first and only accredited Indigenous dental therapy degree program of its kind in Canada. Click [here](#) to learn more. ISC is investing \$2.1 million to support a new generation of Indigenous dental therapists, who will be key to providing culturally appropriate oral health services to Indigenous patients and communities.

## Culture

### Films from the National Film Board of Canada

This June, [nfb.ca](#) will stream free of charge more films than ever as the National Film Board of Canada celebrates National Indigenous History Month, Pride Month and World Oceans Day. Available indefinitely, new works will join more than 5,500 already online. A recent release is focused on the Kainai First Nation entitled: **Kímmapiiyipitssini: The Meaning of Empathy by Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers - NFB**

Follow filmmaker Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers as she creates an intimate portrait of her community and the impacts of the substance use and overdose epidemic. Witness the change brought by community members with substance-use disorder, first responders and medical professionals as they strive for harm reduction in the Kainai First Nation.

