

COVID-19 MESSAGE FROM ISC SK REGION

January 4, 2021

Hello /Tansi,

Happy New Year 2021! We welcome a new year, and reflect on the one that has passed. Despite the mental, physical, and financial toll of these past 12 months, we have also seen enormous strength, resilience, and strong collaboration and cooperation. These actions should inspire us all as we move into the next year.

In 2021, we will continue our fight against COVID-19 with a renewed sense of hope. We will continue to work with the Province of Saskatchewan and Indigenous communities and partners, to ensure that we all will have access to vaccines as soon as possible. We will also keep doing what it takes, for as long as it takes, to support people and communities through this crisis.

As we wrap up this year and move into a new one, we invite you to reflect on all that we have learned about ourselves – our perseverance, our ingenuity, and our compassion for others.

Please continue to keep following public health guidelines and measures. With the numbers of COVID-19 climbing in Saskatchewan, it is our responsibility to do all that is necessary to ensure we protect our most vulnerable citizens. Thank you all for continuing to do your part to protect your elders, vulnerable members and communities.

Double your protection. Use a mask and the COVID Alert app.



UPDATES

- [Government of Canada COVID-19 Update for Indigenous Peoples and communities](#)

On Dec 29, Minister Hajdu and Blair issue a news release reminding Canadians against non-essential travel and that travellers returning to Canada are subject to 14-day mandatory requirement.

- [Government of Canada provides \\$70 million in additional funding to the Red Cross for ongoing COVID-19 response](#)
- [Health Canada authorizes Moderna COVID-19 vaccine](#)

LATEST COVID-19 INFORMATION

Cases in Saskatchewan First Nations Communities

As of January 4, there are 2440 confirmed COVID-19 cases reported in Saskatchewan First Nation communities:

684 active cases, 1737 recoveries and nineteen (19) First Nations residents with COVID-19 have died.

VACCINE DELIVERY

Following up on the initial COVID-19 vaccine distribution pilot, Saskatchewan is now into Phase 1 of the Vaccine Delivery Plan. This phase is expected to last three months, in which vaccine will be sequenced out to key health care workers, northern residents, long-term care staff and residents, and all residents 80 years and over across Saskatchewan.

Northern Saskatchewan is receiving 4,900 doses of Moderna vaccine, starting with health care workers providing direct-care to COVID-19 patients and staff and residents of long term care. Vaccination is expected to begin the first week of January 2021. Detailed plans are still being developed.

Vaccination for COVID-19 is voluntary.

The Moderna vaccine being used in Northern Saskatchewan is more flexible in that it can be stored at temperatures of -20 degrees versus the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, which must be stored at -80 degrees. This makes it better suited for deliver in northern and remote locations.

In the North, posters are being provided for distribution, and information will be shared through the media, as well. This includes radio and print advertising, community scrolls and social media in English as well. Where possible, translated materials will be available in Cree, Dene and Michif.

In the coming weeks, residents 50 and over living in remote and isolated communities in the north will be able to be vaccinated for COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccination is administered twice and with the Moderna vaccine they are given 28 days apart.

The SHA has added vaccination information to the daily cases news release. Plans are being made to add a chart to the website detailing vaccine rollout and statistics and materials are being produced and shipped to locations in the north to support vaccine rollout.

Public communications activities are being planned to advise residents in the targeted communities of the need to be vaccinated.

COVID-19 vaccine delivery in First Nations in Saskatchewan will require highly coordinated effort and collaboration between ISC, First Nations partners, and provincial health authorities. Planning timelines are rapid and early engagement is paramount.

First Nations partners are invited to an engagement session on COVID-19 vaccine readiness with Indigenous Services Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada and representatives from the Province of Saskatchewan. The session is scheduled for January 6, 2021 from 1pm – 4pm.