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Toolkit for Communities Receiving COVID-19 Vaccine

This guide is intended to support Health Directors to ensure that Communities are prepared to offer and provide COVID-19 immunizations to their members when it becomes available.

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1. General information for Health Directors

The availability of vaccines for COVID-19 is a historic moment for us all. First Nations in British Columbia (BC) have been identified as some of the first groups to have access to the limited supply of vaccine currently available in BC.

The COVID-19 immunization program will involve making vaccines available to everyone in the province for whom the vaccine is recommended and who would like to be vaccinated:

“BC hopes to have vaccine available for all those who choose to vaccinate by the end of 2021. It will take time before there’s enough vaccine for everyone. While the immunizations take place, we will need to continue to maintain COVID-19 prevention measures.” – Source: [BC Centre for Disease Control \(BCCDC\)](#)

BC’s vaccination strategy has been developed based on recommendations from the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization \(NACI\)](#), and is focused on protecting those most vulnerable to severe illness first. NACI recommends certain populations be prioritized for early COVID-19 vaccination.

BC is receiving vaccine doses as they are [approved by Health Canada](#). Vaccines are being distributed through a phased immunization program. The goal is to immunize British Columbians as safely and effectively as possible. For more information on the timeline of the COVID-19 vaccine roll out in BC, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/vaccines>.

Distribution of vaccine to First Nations Communities in BC

Vaccine distribution will be based on an approach that focuses on rural and remote First Nations communities and communities that have already experienced larger numbers of COVID-19 cases.

You will be notified that vaccine is scheduled for your community from the FNHA Regional Executive Director. At that time you will be told about how and when to expect the vaccine. Prior to delivery of vaccine, please ensure you have everything in place and that a nurse is available to accept the vaccine delivery.

As per our agreement with the Province of BC to secure prioritized access to COVID-19 vaccines for First Nations people, these initial doses are focused on First Nations people living in community. Consistent with the whole of community approach, the vaccines provided are also meant for individuals living and working in community who may not be First Nations such as family members, health care workers serving community, community workers, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) members living in community etc. This includes individuals who live off reserve, but close to community, due to housing challenges. As the current allocation of vaccines is based on population figures for those living in community it is insufficient to serve away from home members. However, please be assured that we are partnering with Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) to ensure those living away from home are prioritized. This approach is directed by feedback from First Nations Chiefs and other leaders gathered by the First Nations Health Council (FNHC), First Nations Health Directors Association (FNHDA) and the FNHA.

COVID-19 Ethical Decision-Making Framework: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID-19_Ethical_Decision_Making_Framework.pdf

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Some aspects of vaccine delivery are regulated, such as clinical standards of practice, vaccine administration, and physical management of the vaccine. Other parts of the process are within the control of the Community. Enough COVID-19 vaccine will be made available so that all Community members the age of 18 and over will have the opportunity to be immunized, if they so choose.

It is our strong recommendation that, upon receipt of vaccines, that an initial vaccination campaign of up to one week be implemented.

It is up to Community Leadership, Health Director (HD) and Nurse/Community Health Nurse (CHN) to determine the process for administration of the vaccine, including such things as vaccinating Elders first, doing in-home immunizations, drive-by clinics, or clinics by appointment. As long as the integrity of the vaccine is maintained, there are many options for vaccine delivery. Due to requisite COVID-19 processes, such as personal protective equipment (PPE) use and physical distancing, and other factors related to the vaccine, we recommend that appointments be scheduled for this vaccine. This will also ensure that nurses can arrange that all 10 doses in each vial will be used.

It is a collective responsibility to be good stewards of this resource while respecting the processes and needs of individual communities. Once vaccine is present in the Community, please ensure that access to the vaccine begins as soon as possible and that the delivery of vaccine becomes the main focus for health centre staff.

Role of the Community Leadership/HD

- Complete the attached “Readiness Assessment Tool” (Appendix A) to ensure your community is ready and able to accept delivery of vaccine.
- Ensure there is a working biological refrigerator to hold the vaccine. This needs to have a data logger (smart button or Berlinger) and be monitored and recorded twice daily.
- Ensure there is a working back-up generator or other provision for maintaining vaccine cold-chain in case of a power outage.
- Ensure personal PPE supplies and vaccination supplies are on-hand.
- Ensure capacity for scheduling appointments and logging vaccinations.
- Inform Community members of the opportunity for immunization and provide information about vaccine (see Appendices B and F).
- Provide a location for hosting immunization clinics that meets public health physical distancing requirements.
- Work collaboratively with the Health Professionals and decision-makers in your Community to prioritize administration of vaccine.

Role of the Nurses in Community

- Ensure Immunization competency requirements have been met.
- Receive the vaccine and confirm cold chain was maintained.

- Organize immunization clinics in partnership with Community Leadership/HD.
- Provide informed consent to Community members prior to immunization.
- Document and report immunizations as per Provincial requirements using the eForm.

Process: It is recognized that in the context of the global pandemic, the need for an expedited immunization competency education process is essential to administer the COVID-19 vaccine in a timely manner (i.e. for those who will be providing COVID-19 vaccines only). There is a special process for nurses who do not routinely provide immunization programming and will ONLY be immunizing with COVID-19 vaccine. Nurses can be directed to email immunize@fnha.ca for more information. Note: New immunizers are required to complete immunization skills checklist sign-off for COVID-19 vaccine. The FNHA Immunization team can help facilitate virtual immunization skills assessment sign-off if there is limited capacity to support an in-person assessment.

If there are any questions, please email immunize@fnha.ca.

Community Members

- Have an opportunity to ask questions.
- Freely give informed consent for vaccination.

FNHA Regional Team

- Primary contact for operational support and access to vaccine.
- Primary planning contact with RHAs to ensure a community-wide immunization campaign planning/approach.
- Manage requests for staffing surge support and other related resource requests.

FNHA Provincial Teams

- Provide support to nurses specific to vaccine administration.
- Facilitate access to eForm for all providers of vaccine (Panorama team).
- Provide logistics support including provision of PPE and vaccination supplies.
- Provide support with Community readiness.
- Produce resource materials to support informed consent for vaccinations and answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ).
- The FNHA Provincial team may hold operational responsibility for some sites and will work alongside Community and FNHA Regional teams to ensure planning and operationalization of the vaccine campaign.

3. Storage and Handling of Vaccine

The province is preparing for a range of COVID-19 vaccines that will have different distribution methods.

- Some vaccines require special transportation, storage and handling to keep them protected (i.e. frozen at ultra-low temperatures, not shaken, and to keep those unpacking them safe). Please note, decisions related to the transportation or allocation of vaccines following the initial campaign are held by the FNHA Senior Leadership and preapproval is required to transport vaccines to any other sites.
- Your health center should be equipped with appropriate vaccine storage such as a vaccine biological fridge and have dedicated staff that are trained to monitor and handle vaccines as per the BCCDC guidelines.
- You may need special equipment for unpacking the frozen vaccine and additional training may be required for those handling the vaccine shipments at ultra-low temperatures.
- Nurses who meet immunization competency practice standards and have Certification to administer COVID-19 vaccines will take a lead role in receiving, handling and storage of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Refer to specific product guidelines and BCCDC website for resources on Vaccine Storage, handling and management. <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/vaccine-management>

When the vaccine arrives in the Community, it must be met by a nurse and immediately put into refrigerated storage. Detailed instructions on how to confirm that the vaccine is in good, useable condition will be provided to the nurse in the documents accompanying the shipping container. Immunizations should not start until the product has been confirmed to be usable. There are also follow-up instructions for storage and handling.

Moderna vaccine-specific information: The Moderna vaccine will be provided to most First Nation Communities. Once thawed, the vaccine is stable in a refrigerator at 2-8 C for 30 days. Once a vial is opened, the entire 10 doses **must** be used within 6 hours.

Please see Appendix F for links to information to all approved vaccine products.

4. COVID-19 Vaccine Planning Tool

The COVID-19 Vaccine Planning Questionnaire can be a valuable tool. If your community has not completed one this could be an option. Get the questionnaire here:



COVID-19 Vaccine
Planning Questionnai

5. Messages for Community Members

About COVID-19 Vaccine

It is important that Community Members have the information needed to make an informed decision about choosing to take the COVID-19 vaccine. See attached Health File and Easy Access Information sheet (Appendices B and F).

How to access your immunization

See attached **Appendix C** Community letter template for your use.

6. Documentation and Reporting Requirements

As part of the Provincial Public Health vaccine delivery system, we have the obligation to record and report all doses of COVID-19 vaccine given to individuals. This information is used for Public Health planning purposes and does not disclose individual and personal information. Nurses providing immunizations in your community will be documenting vaccine delivery using a Provincial eForm either directly or by having it entered on their behalf if there are Wi-Fi access issues.

Required daily vaccination reporting through use of the mandatory e-forms portal will support an understanding of how many vaccinations are administered each day and how many doses still remain at the end of the vaccination campaign. Entry of data in to this e-forms portal is required by 7pm each day a vaccination clinic is offered.

They will also do a daily report of the number of vials opened and number of doses given. This information is needed to fulfil the FNHAs responsibility to monitor vaccine supply needs.

Nurses will receive regular communications from FNHA related to reporting requirements and other clinical issues. Please be sure that all nurses working in your Community are receiving email updates from the FNHA Communicable Disease Control (CDC) team. Email the FNHA CDC team at CDC@fnha.ca if they are not receiving these updates.

In order to access the eForm, all nurses need to obtain a BC Services Card account and need to have the Google Chrome web browser installed on their computers/laptops.

Please see attached details in **Appendix D** outlining Nursing Documentation and Reporting requirements.

Appendices

Appendix A Community Readiness Assessment

Complete this readiness assessment prior to accepting delivery of COVID-19 Vaccine in your Community.

- Sufficient Nursing staff to provide immunization to all Community Members who wish to receive the immunization.
- Nurses are certified to administer the COVID-19 Vaccine – required training has been completed.
- Nurses will be present on the day when the COVID-19 Vaccine is delivered and throughout the entire time when clinics are planned.
- Support staff are available to assist with clinic operations:
 - Roles and responsibilities clarified as part of planning process (i.e. greeters, line control, after vaccine reaction area, information recorder)
- A suitable location has been identified to hold clinics that meets public health physical distancing requirements.
- Clinical supplies such as PPE, syringes, Band-Aids and alcohol swabs have been ordered and are on hand.
- There is a functioning biological (vaccine) refrigerator with monitoring (smart button or Berlinger) and functioning back-up power supply.
- There is a plan for informing Community of the opportunity to receive the vaccine including written information about the vaccine and how to arrange for an immunization.

Appendix B **Information for Community Members - All about COVID-19 Vaccine**

What is the COVID-19 vaccine and how does it work?

- The COVID-19 Vaccine has been developed to help your body resist the COVID-19 virus when you are exposed to it. When the vaccine enters your body, it teaches your body to recognize and fight against the COVID-19 virus so that you do not become sick.
- It takes about 7-10 days for the vaccine to do its work. After the first dose of a two-dose series, you may experience up to 70 per cent effectiveness. This rises to about 95 per cent about 10 days after the second dose.
- Questions remain about how long immunity lasts and whether a vaccinated person can still transmit the disease. Research into these and other questions continues.
- As with any vaccine, the COVID-19 vaccine may not provide complete protection for some people.

Why is it important to get a COVID-19 vaccination?

- Vaccines save lives. Vaccines don't just protect the people getting vaccinated; they can protect everyone around them too. The more people in a community who are vaccinated and therefore protected from COVID-19, the harder it is for it to spread.
The FNHA Medical Officers strongly recommend that Indigenous people opt to get the vaccine when they are offered one.

Is the COVID-19 vaccination safe?

- Vaccines are safe. To ensure vaccines are safe, there are many processes and standards in place. The COVID-19 vaccine has been rigorously tested.
- There is strong evidence that the vaccine is safe and works for people 18 years and over - including seniors/Elders – and that it is highly effective across age, sex, race and ethnicity.
- COVID-19 vaccines have not yet been tested in people who are under 16 years old, pregnant or have some immune-compromising conditions (i.e., people undergoing chemotherapy, are breast feeding or who've had an organ transplant). People with these conditions should speak with their primary care provider about getting the vaccine.
- The vaccine is recommended for people with underlying health conditions, such as diabetes and/or heart disease. This is because most people with underlying health conditions are vulnerable to developing a severe illness if they do get coronavirus, and vaccines are the most effective way to prevent that from happening.
- If you had, or may have had, COVID-19 you should still get the vaccine when it's available to you. This is because you may not be immune to the virus that causes COVID-19 and you could get infected again and become sick. If you are unsure, check with your primary care provider.

What are the side effects?

- Only minor side effects were observed in clinical trials, similar to ones you might get from any shots. These include pain at injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain and fever. These reactions are mild and generally last one to two days. They are evidence that your immune system is working to respond to the vaccine.
- Should you develop any serious symptoms, including those that could be an allergic reaction, immediately seek medical attention. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include: hives (bumps on the skin that are often very itchy); swelling of the face, tongue or throat; and difficulty breathing. This is why you are asked to wait 15 minutes before you leave the clinic after getting a vaccination.
- If you have experienced a serious allergic reaction to another vaccine, drug or food, you should talk to your health professional before you receive the vaccine.

I still feel nervous about getting the vaccine...

- Vaccination is a personal choice that most Canadians agree is part of good health and important for prevention of serious disease.
- The COVID-19 vaccine is an option the FNHA's Medical Officers recommend to protect you, your family and your community.
- Feeling worried or hesitant is normal when something is new and it is understandable that some people – especially Indigenous people – may lack trust in the medical system. However, vaccine trials go through rigorous, well-established ethical processes. We can feel assured that vaccines are safe, effective and that they will save lives.
- Reduced access to stable housing, income, clean water and/or health and social services place many Indigenous peoples at higher risk of COVID-19. The COVID-19 vaccine is one way that Indigenous peoples can protect themselves from this virus and build "Community Immunity."

For further information visit: <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-What-You-Need-to-Know-About-the-COVID-19-Vaccine.pdf>

If you have further questions, please reach out to your Community Nurse or Primary Care Provider.

Appendix C Instructions to Community Members - Template letter

Dear Community Members,

COVID-19 vaccine is coming to our community on _____ (*date*).

There is enough vaccine for all Community Members aged 18 years and older. The first vaccinations will be provided to Elders of the Community.

In order to maintain COVID-19 protocols, we will be making appointments for the vaccine.

Please call _____ (*number*) to book an appointment

OR

In order to maintain COVID-19 protocols, we will be holding the vaccination clinics at (*site*).

Please come to _____ location

On _____ (*date*)

Between the hours of _____ and _____.

Note: You must maintain physical distancing and wear a mask at all times while waiting for, and receiving your immunization. In addition, after immunization you will still need to maintain all public health measures such as wearing a mask in outdoor and indoor public spaces, maintaining physical distancing, hand washing and no social gatherings of any size at your residence with anyone other than your household or core bubble.

Please read the attached information about the COVID-19 vaccine and review the COVID-19 Vaccine Screening Checklist prior to coming to the clinic. If you have questions, please call the Health Centre at _____ (*number*).

Appendix D Nursing Documentation and Reporting Requirements

The following instructions **must** be followed.

All COVID-19 vaccine documentation must be done using the Provincial COVID-19 Vaccine eForm. If you do not have Wi-Fi access in your location, please contact panorama@fnha.ca to make arrangements for data entry to be done on your behalf.

Use of the eForm is a requirement for all nurses in the Province. Do not direct enter into Panorama, the eForm must be used.*

Access to the eForm can be found at: <https://www.eforms.phsaehealth.ca> on your Chrome browser.

Steps to be granted access to the eForm:

1. Have CHROME web browser on your computer – please ensure that you are using Google Chrome and have enables pop up and turned off auto populate (see page 7 of guide).
2. Get the BC Service Card app on your phone (work through the steps attached to enroll).
3. If you have not been enrolled yet please send panorama@fnha.ca a completed enrollment (attached) form so we can enter you as a user. **Please enter all users in your community on one form so we can submit as one document.** We can also add users at a later time.
4. eForm log is found at <https://www.eforms.phsaehealth.ca>
5. Please review the training guide and watch short video for how to use (attached).



COVIDDowntimeEFor
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FNHAeForms
External Access BC Se



FNHATemplate
eForms Enrolment - C



COVIDDowntimeEFor
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COVID19
Immunization Entry F

Questions?

Contact panorama@fnha.ca

Appendix E COVID-19 Vaccine Screening Checklist



COVID-19 Vaccine Screening Checklist

1. Are you feeling ill today?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, what symptoms?
2. Are you or could you be pregnant?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Are you breastfeeding?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Do you have any allergies? 4a. If yes: Do you have a severe allergy to polyethylene glycol (PEG)? It can be found in some products such as cosmetics, skin care products, laxatives, cough syrups, and bowel preparation products for colonoscopy. PEG can be an additive in some processed foods and drinks but no cases of anaphylaxis to PEG in foods and drinks have been reported. 4b. If yes to #4, have you had anaphylaxis (severe allergy) from an unknown cause? Were you seen by an allergy specialist?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please provide details If anaphylaxis without known or obvious cause, consider referral to an allergist prior to immunization.
5. Do you have any problems with your immune system or are you taking any medications that can affect your immune system (e.g., high dose steroids, chemotherapy)?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please provide details
6. Do you have an autoimmune disease?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please provide details
7. If this is your second dose, did you have any side effects after the first dose?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, provide details
8. Have you received another vaccine (not a COVID-19 vaccine) in the past 14 days?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please provide the date of the other vaccine
9. Have you had previous lab-confirmed COVID-19 disease?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, when?
10. Have you been hospitalized because of COVID-19 infection? If yes, were you treated with convalescent plasma or monoclonal antibody?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
11. Have you ever felt faint or fainted after a past vaccination or medical procedure?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please provide details

Appendix F **BC and Federal Government information about COVID-19**

BC Government COVID-19 Vaccines Website Link:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/vaccines>

Indigenous Services Canada Website (COVID-19 vaccines and Indigenous peoples) Link:

<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1603132339009/1603132369373>