



WEENEEBAYKO AREA  
HEALTH AUTHORITY (WAHA)

19 Hospital Drive  
Box 664  
Moose Factory, ON POL 1W0  
Tel: (705) 658-4544  
Fax: (705) 658-4917

# News Release

**Contact:**

Yolaine Kirlew, Director of Corporate  
Communications and Strategic  
Partnerships  
Phone: (705) 658-4544 (2617)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 08<sup>th</sup>, 2021

## **Introducing the COVID-19 Vaccination in the James and Hudson Bay Region**

**Friday January 08<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (Moose Factory)** - To best manage the public health emergency resulting from the current COVID-19 pandemic, Health Canada has approved the use of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines in Canada to prevent the spread of the virus and minimize the level of illness. On January 06<sup>th</sup>, our region received its phase one doses of vaccines to be administer to our elders and health care providers.

WAHA is committed to continue collaborating with all our regional Chief and Councils, FNIHB, ORNGE and Porcupine Health Unit to share key vaccine information to community members, and to help individuals make an informed choice about getting the vaccine. Our work with ORNGE will bring the vaccines into the community and vaccinate community members who choose to get the vaccine.

The vaccine rollout is divided into two phases. This morning, the first phase recipients have begun receiving one of two Moderna doses. A second does will be offered a month later. The priority groups are as follows;

- **Elders residing in our congregate setting of Moose Factory, Attawapiskat, and Fort Albany.**
- **Elders in Complex Continuing Care and Alternate Level of Care (CCC/ALC) beds.**
- **Health care providers who provide care in patient care areas.**

Once phase one participants have been vaccinated, we anticipate the arrival of more doses to commence our phase two plans. In phase two the vaccination is focused on each community in the region. A team will be assembled by the

province, utilizing ORNGE paramedics to visit each community and then WAHA/local public health care providers will deliver the program after the team visits.

While the vaccine is voluntary, it is an important opportunity to protect oneself from COVID-19. It will be free of charge. To the following groups are determined to be high risk:

- **Residents and staff of shared living settings that provide care for seniors**
- **Health care workers who have direct contact with patients, including those who work in health care settings and personal support workers.**
- **Adults in Indigenous communities (18 years of age and older)**

Over the next few weeks, information about how the vaccine works, the level of protection provided and the risk/benefits of the vaccine will be available through local public health nurses, radio and social media messaging, printed documents, provincial and federal government websites, WAHA website/links and your local hospital or clinic health care providers.

WAHA encourages the communities to remain vigilant. Our goal is to ensure the safety of all our community members. Please keep following the public health measures that ensure the spread of COVID-19 is contained. Together, let's look after our love ones.

-30-

For more information, contact the Director of Corporate Communications and Strategic Partnerships as indicated above, visit [www.waha.ca](http://www.waha.ca) or the "Weeneebayko Area Health Authority" Facebook page, and for all vaccination questions email us at [vaccine@waha.ca](mailto:vaccine@waha.ca).



On January 8, 2021, the Moderna vaccine gets prepared to be administered at Weeneebayko General Hospital, Moose Factory.



On January 8, 2021, the first elder to receive the COVID-19 Moderna Vaccine is Gertrude Johnstone-mother, grandmother, great-grandmother & active member of the Moose Cree FN. She has retired from Moose Factory General Hospital/WAHA as a healthcare provider. As a consummate advocate, she sought to ensure that our elders of the community were taken care of first, and that they would have the opportunity to receive the vaccine as soon as it became available. She is a brave woman in this historic moment.



Dr. Elaine Innes, Chief of Staff at Weeneebayko Area Health Authority receives first dose of Moderna Vaccine.



We were vaccinated today! Elder, Gertrude Johnstone (retired healthcare professional in Moose Factory, ON). Lynne Innes, President and CEO of Weeneebayko Area Health Authority, Jordana Johnstone, RN at Weeneebayko General Hospital- WGH and Dr. Elaine Innes, Chief of Staff at Weeneebayko General Hospital- WGH.