

## Community Update – December 31, 2020

### **Emerging Wisely Current State: Relaxing Phase 2 – Next Steps** An Excerpt from a Statement from the Chief Public Health Officer

The Office of the Chief Public Health Officer (CPHO) has categorized residents and staff at long term care as among those at highest risk and a priority for immunization. Priority groups for the COVID-19 vaccination in the NWT are as follows:

- Advanced age: the risk of COVID-19 severity starts to increase after age 60. Most vulnerable in this category are those who live in long-term care facilities or in shared living environments.
- Existing chronic disease and multiple medical conditions: residents with conditions like chronic lung, kidney, or heart disease are at greater risk for experiencing severe form of COVID-19 and its complications. Those who travel outside the NWT regularly for medical care are at even greater risk.
- Likelihood of transmitting COVID-19 to those at high risk of severe illness and death is another important consideration. This risk group may include frontline health care workers, or those who provide care to high risk vulnerable populations.
- Resident workers who live in the NWT, but work regularly outside the NWT or at work camps with out-of-territory workers are at elevated risk of acquiring COVID-19 and transmitting to family, household members or those in the community.
- Living in a remote community, including Indigenous communities, with limited health infrastructure in comparison to larger centers.

These priority groups will receive the vaccination in a phased approach that will be expanded to the entire eligible NWT population as supply increases. The GNWT continues to work towards a target of March 2021 for completion of our vaccination roll out.

A team from the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) was deployed to vaccinate residents and staff at these two long term care facilities earlier today. The team was made up of logisticians, nurses and translators who were also on site to help the local health care staff who are considered the experts in their communities deliver the vaccine.

NWT residents can be confident that top Canadian experts, scientists, and medical professionals carefully reviewed all of the scientific data and evidence for vaccine safety and effectiveness.

NWT residents have a choice whether or not they get the COVID-19 vaccine. Even if you are not at high risk of severe disease from COVID-19, getting vaccinated will help protect those around you who might be. Think of your friends, family, co-workers, elders, and other community members. The GNWT encourages all eligible adult residents to get vaccinated.

For further information please contact the Town Office at 587-3700 during our business hours of 8:30AM – 5:00PM. You may also email us at [towninformation@normanwells.com](mailto:towninformation@normanwells.com).