



Community Update- December 23, 2020

Emerging Wisely Current State: Relaxing Phase 2: Next Steps

Julie Green, Minister of Health and Social Services, issued the following media statement today:

“This morning news spread that Health Canada has authorized the distribution of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine in Canada. This is exciting news and puts the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) on track to meet our goal of having 75% of eligible residents 18 years of age or older vaccinated in 2021. The NWT anticipates the first shipment of 7200 doses of the vaccine will be received by the end of December 2020, which is enough for 3600 NWT residents to receive the required 2 doses of the vaccine.

“Now that the vaccine has been approved, the GNWT can finalize our vaccine rollout approach, which will be released in early January 2021. There is still some work to do behind the scenes to get ready for the arrival of the vaccination and implementation of our plan. Hiring, communications, and logistics are key activities that must be complete before vaccination can begin. The GNWT also continues to work with Joint Task Force to ensure the vaccine is distributed as efficiently as possible given the NWT’s unique geography and climate.

“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. While the vaccine will not be mandatory, the GNWT encourages all eligible adult residents to get immunized to protect themselves and others against COVID-19. Once priority groups at highest risk have been offered the vaccine, roll-out will continue for other residents. Vaccine uptake will be especially important to protect those who cannot yet receive the Moderna vaccine, including residents who are pregnant, immunocompromised, or less than 18 years of age.

“Though many GNWT staff are enjoying some days off to celebrate the holidays, there are still teams working behind the scenes to finalize our robust vaccine rollout plan that will reach each and every NWT community. This is a big undertaking over the holidays, but I have every confidence in the staff from all three health authorities, the Department of Health and Social Services, and our partners at Joint Task Force North, and I look forward to our rollout plan being finalized and shared with NWT residents and media in early 2021.

“I want to reiterate to NWT residents that though the approval of the Moderna vaccine means we’re one step closer to resuming the lives we had before the pandemic started – we are not there yet. The holiday seasons still remains a high risk season for the spread of COVID-19 and NWT residents are reminded to take extra precautions as you enjoy the holidays with your loved ones. Follow the public health orders, wash your hands often, wear your mask, keep your distance and be safe. And remember to stay home if you are sick and get tested. We can see the finish line now, but we all still have a role to play in keeping our families and communities safe.”

For more information on the Moderna vaccine, visit <https://www.gov.nt.ca/covid-19/en/questions-and-answers>

Or call 867-587-3700 or email towninformation@normanwells.com