

MEDIA RELEASE

COVID-19: Porcupine Health Unit Expands into Phase 2 of the Vaccine Rollout

For Immediate Release — Wednesday, April 7, 2021

Timmins, Ontario — Dr. Lianne Catton, Medical Officer of Health for the Porcupine Health Unit (PHU) is pleased to announce that the PHU is now starting to book the first groups of Phase Two of Ontario’s *COVID-19 Vaccination Plan*.

“We have progressed very well with Phase 1 vaccinations,” states Dr. Catton. “As we continue to ensure access for those in Phase 1 of the provincial vaccination plan, we have moved on with some of the primary priority groups in Phase 2, more specifically, the older adults. We are offering clinics for adults in five-year age bands, which started with 75 and older, and have announced clinics across the region.”

As vaccines are delivered to the PHU, clinics will be planned for other groups included in Phase 2.

The health unit will continue to follow the Ontario Government’s *Guidance for Prioritization of Phase 2 populations for COVID-19 Vaccination* to plan for vaccine clinics across the region.

Primary Priority groups in Phase 2 (based on the Ontario Government’s criteria for prioritization) includes:

- Older adults (60 to 79): starting with those aged 75 to 79 and decreasing in 5-year age increments.
 - The PHU will continue to announce clinics for eligible age groups as we progress over the next few weeks.
- Residents, essential caregivers, and staff of High-Risk Congregate Living Settings.
 - The PHU is working directly with these settings to plan upcoming clinics for these individuals.
- People with health conditions and certain caregivers: starting with those at Highest Risk, then those at High Risk, followed by people who are At-Risk due to health conditions.
 - The PHU will be collaborating with primary care and other health care partners to identify and plan clinics for these groups, as per the *list* provided by the Ministry.



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Secondary Priority groups in Phase 2 (based on the Ontario Government's criteria for prioritization):

These groups will be vaccinated later in Phase 2 and include:

- Remaining individuals with at-risk health conditions.
 - Please refer to the *list*.
- Essential workers who cannot work from home, beginning with those in the First Group, followed by those in the Second Group.
 - Please review the *list*.

A complete list of eligible vaccine recipients in Phase 2 is available on the Ministry of Health's website: *Phase 2 Prioritization for COVID-19 Vaccination - 2021-03-23 (gov.on.ca)*.

"Thanks to the invaluable efforts of our staff, community partners, and volunteers, we are able to move into this second phase," says Dr. Catton. "I would also like to extend my thanks to all members of the community for their patience as we work to ensure that everyone in the PHU area who wants a vaccine can get one."

To date, close to 14,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in the Porcupine Health Unit region.

As the PHU begins clinics for priority groups in Phase 2, individuals who were eligible for a vaccine in Phase 1 but were not able to attend a clinic can still get a vaccine. These individuals are encouraged to contact the health unit to schedule an appointment for their first dose. High risk groups eligible in Phase 1 include:

- Residents, staff and essential caregivers of long-term care homes, retirement homes and First Nations elder care;
- Healthcare workers, including employees, staff who work or study in health care organization and other health care personnel;
- Adults who identify as First Nations, Métis and Inuit in communities, including remote and isolated communities; and
- Adults (18 years or older) who live in the same household with an adult who identifies as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis and Inuit);
- Adult recipients of chronic home health care; and
- Adults 80 years of age and older.

Vaccination clinics for those who qualify under Phase 2 will be posted on the PHU website and the PHU Facebook page as dates are confirmed, based on vaccine allocation.

Information about vaccines and upcoming clinics can be found on the Porcupine Health Unit's Vaccine page.

Additional COVID-19 information can be found on the Porcupine Health Unit's website.

Visit Ontario's [website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect Ontarians from COVID-19.

Download the *COVID Alert app*.

The Porcupine Health Unit is located in Northeastern Ontario, serving the entire Cochrane District and Hornepayne, in Algoma District. The main office is located in Timmins, Ontario, with branch offices in Cochrane, Hearst, Hornepayne, Iroquois Falls, Kapuskasing, Matheson, Moosonee and Smooth Rock Falls.

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