



MEDIA ADVISORY

Tuesday, March 2, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MATAWA HEALTH CO-OPERATIVE TO HOST FIRST COVID-19 VACCINATION CLINIC IN THUNDER BAY FOR HIGH-RISK POPULATION

THUNDER BAY, ON: The Matawa Health Co-operative (MHC) will be hosting their first COVID-19 vaccination clinic event on Wednesday March 3 and Thursday March 4 from 12:30 – 4:00 p.m. each day. The clinic is an opportunity for high-risk Matawa First Nation members who reside in Thunder Bay to receive their first dose of the Pfizer vaccine. This clinic will operate by appointment-only with prioritization first being made for vulnerable Matawa members especially for those who are +60 years, transient, homeless, precariously housed and/or having mental health and addictions issues. Arrangements for these populations have been made over the past week to ensure their participation in this clinic.

The clinic is an exciting initiative led by the MHC with the assistance of the Thunder Bay District Health Unit as part of MHC’s mandate to provide/augment health services that are tailored to individual community’s needs and address mental health and addictions, diabetes and chronic diseases amongst Matawa membership. Since COVID-19 immunization became available in Canada in December 2020, Matawa First Nations leadership have been calling for immunization of their members both in road-access communities and in the urban population.

On February 14, 2021, the province’s COVID-19 vaccine distribution task force provided a memo to Ontario medical officers of health including the Thunder Bay District Health Unit providing direction for its vaccination program including identification of immediate priority and next priority groups. Indigenous adults in northern remote and higher-risk communities including on reserves and in urban communities and all Indigenous adults were amongst both these priorities. Having the medical staff, training and infrastructure in place, MHC were able to move quickly for the urban Matawa population in Thunder Bay starting with the most vulnerable when Indigenous adults became prioritized.

The MHC anticipates administering over 170 vaccinations throughout this clinic. Members of the media are cordially invited to attend as follows:

Date/Time: Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 12:30 p.m.
Location: Heritage Building CLE Grounds | 425 Northern Avenue | Thunder Bay, Ontario

For more information, please contact Carol Audet, Communications Manager – Matawa First Nations Management at (807) 632-9663 or by email at caudet@matawa.on.ca

**** COVID-PROTOCOL **** REPORTERS ARE ASKED TO NOT WALK-IN BUT REQUEST ASSISTANCE FROM CAROL AUDET IN THE HERITAGE BUILDING PARKING LOT – SHE WILL COORDINATE ENTRANCE INTO THE CLINIC.



- CIRCLE OF BELONGING -