



## Tripartite First Nations Health Plan

November 9th, 2009

### ***An Information Bulletin from the Tripartite First Nations H1N1 Working Group***

**Dear First Nations Community Members,**

The distribution of the H1N1 Influenza vaccine is under way in BC. We know a primary concern for First Nations communities is that community members who want the H1N1 vaccine receive it as soon as possible.

Similar to other vaccination programs, the regional health authorities are providing the H1N1 vaccine for all BC citizens, including First Nations on and off reserve.

The Tripartite First Nations H1N1 Working Group has been advocating for First Nations to be a priority group for receiving the H1N1 vaccine. Provincial authorities have been supportive of this and, in some regional health authorities, the designation of on-reserve First Nations populations as a priority group for H1N1 vaccine has resulted in vaccine clinics on reserve.

Some First Nations communities have received enough vaccine for everyone who lives in the community. However, because the supply of the vaccine is limited at this point, other communities – especially ones with larger populations – have had to set priorities for who receives the H1N1 vaccine.

***Here are some important points about the H1N1 vaccination program:***

- **The on-reserve vaccine clinics are only receiving enough vaccine to cover the on-reserve First Nations population. For First Nations individuals living off reserve vaccine will be available either through a physician or at a regional health authority vaccine clinic.**
- **Health care staff in nursing stations and health centres have been working at full capacity due to the vaccination program. They are not equipped to handle sudden increases in demand should many community members return to the reserve.**
- **To support vaccine providers on reserve during this very busy time, leadership and community members can help by getting the message out about who is able to receive the H1N1 vaccine at the clinics.**
- **The priority groups in the first week of the H1N1 vaccination program, which rolled out on Monday October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009, were:**
  - **Individuals with chronic conditions under age 65**
  - **Pregnant women in the second half of their pregnancy (after 20 weeks)**
  - **People living in remote and isolated communities**

- **The priority groups for the second week of the H1N1 program, which rolled out on Monday November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009, were extended to:**
  - **Household contacts of: infants under 6 months of age and people with compromised immune systems**
  - **Children from 6 months to 5 years of age**
  - **Health care workers**
  
- **Community volunteers can help vaccine providers at clinics by: helping those waiting in line; reviewing information needed before receiving the vaccine; capturing information about vaccine distribution; and helping community members while they are waiting after receiving the vaccine.**

It is good to know that many First Nations community members are choosing to receive the H1N1 Influenza vaccine – the best way to protect themselves and their loved ones.

In this very busy time, we can work together as community leadership and community members to give important support to vaccine providers and present the facts and updated information on H1N1.

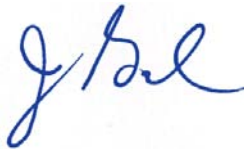
**Questions?** Please contact your local Community Health Nurse or your local health care worker with any questions you have related to H1N1 Influenza or Seasonal Influenza.

**For more information about accessing the Seasonal Influenza vaccine, clinic locations and time of clinics,** visit: [www.immunizebc.ca](http://www.immunizebc.ca).

**For more information on the H1N1 Influenza virus,** visit: [www.gov.bc.ca/h1n1](http://www.gov.bc.ca/h1n1)



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