

MÉTIS NATION BRITISH COLUMBIA HEALTH AND WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 81 | UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION AS OF DECEMBER 10, 2021



"Although the days may be darker, there is also light. There is light in that kindness and compassion for each other in reaching out and connecting with friends and neighbours, particularly people who may be alone or struggling. There is light in keeping our close friends and groups small, spending time outside, enjoying the things we can do instead of focusing on some of those things that are higher risk. Together, we will get through these challenges, and we'll do it by being kind and being calm and being safe."

- Dr. Bonnie Henry

[**Click here to register for
your COVID-19 vaccine**](#)

[**Click here to use this COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool if feeling unwell**](#)

If you or someone you know is in need of assistance, please email health@mnbca.ca. MNBC's Ministry of Health team will help connect you to available Community supports.

MÉTIS 24HR CRISIS LINE
1-833-MÉTIS-BC
(1-833-638-4722)

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PHO UPDATES

Nov. 30 - Dec 7, 2021

OMICRON VARIANT

There are currently 5 Omicron cases in BC, all with recent travel to Africa.

TRAVEL AND COVID-19

Because the Omicron variant is still uncharacterized, Government of Canada acted quickly to put in restrictions on travel to try and slow down the introduction. See [here](#) for the BC Travel and COVID-19 guide.

We can't stop the virus from spreading, but we can try to slow it down by Public health Protective measures like: **vaccination, masking in indoor crowded spaces, physical distancing, limiting our gathering sizes, especially when they are indoors, and good ventilation**

NACI BOOSTER RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) released additional recommendations on booster doses, and *recommends a booster at least 6 months after the second dose; immunocompromised people will receive their booster 6 months after their 3rd dose.* This aligns with BC's plans.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Key religious services people attending churches, including choirs, must now wear a mask during services. Masks are required but can be temporarily removed for ceremonial eating and drinking, and by officiants, readers or for singing a solo where physical distancing is observed.

Worship services must also be limited to 50% capacity unless all people attending are fully vaccinated.

RISK FOR COVID-19 INCREASES WITH AGE

There's strong evidence that show the vaccine is very effective for people with strong immune systems, especially in young people. It is very unusual for a vaccinated person under age 70 to require hospitalization.

Since the elderly and health care workers were the ones that had their doses at a shortened interval in the beginning, they're the ones being prioritized for the booster, because most of them are beyond 6 months at this point.

Right now, those living in long-term care and assisted living have all been offered vaccination with their booster doses, and over 90% of those over age 70 will have been invited by the end of this week. Starting the end of this week and early into next week those in the 65+ group will be invited. Clinically extremely vulnerable group that are not immunosuppressed will be invited soon too. Then booster roll-out in age cohorts will begin in January 2022..

INTERIOR HEALTH RESTRICTION LIFTED

Additional restrictions in the Interior Health region are being lifted.

Additional restrictions in Northern Health and Fraser East still remain.

COVID-19 VACCINES FOR KIDS AGED 5-11 ROLL OUT

As of Nov 29th, 104,000 children out of the eligible 350,000 are now registered. Parents can learn more about vaccines on page 4.

Reminder that pharmacies only have vaccines for 12+

Dr. Henry's tips for anxiety and uncertainty during this pandemic

Deep breathing exercises and meditation



Going outside going for a walk



Bake cookies for neighbours or friends
Listen to music



Support others



PEDIATRIC COVID-19

VACCINE

HEALTH CANADA HAS APPROVED THE PFIZER-BIONTECH COMIRNATY mRNA VACCINE FOR CHILDREN AGES 5 TO 11. ALL COVID-19 VACCINES FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN FOLLOW THE SAME RIGOROUS REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS.

DOSAGE OF THE PFIZER mRNA CHILD VACCINE

The Pfizer mRNA vaccine for children uses a smaller dosage (1/3) of the same vaccine used for youth and adults. The lower dose will provide effective protection tailored to children's immune systems, and may have a lower frequency of common reactions.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) advises a minimum of 8 weeks between Dose 1 and Dose 2.

ELIGIBILITY IS BASED ON BIRTH DATE

Children are eligible for the pediatric vaccine on or after their FIFTH BIRTHDAY.

Examples:

- A child's birth date is September 13, 2016. They are eligible now.
- A child's birth date is January 2, 2017. They are eligible on January 2, 2022.

CONSENT IS REQUIRED FOR EVERY CHILD

Consent for a child 5-11 can be provided by a:

- Parent, legal guardian or foster parent
- Custodial caregiver like a grandparent or relative

You'll be asked to provide consent at the clinic location.



"To all of those children who have gotten their vaccines yesterday, today and will be getting them in the days ahead I just want to say you're all brave and vaccine heroes"

- Dr. Bonnie Henry

MORE INFORMATION

1. Learn more about COVID-19 vaccines for children [here](#)
2. Health Canada's statement [here](#)
3. BC Ministry of Health's statement [here](#)
4. BCCDC Children and COVID-19 Vaccination FAQ [here](#)
5. Immunize BC: COVID-19 vaccines FAQ for children aged 5 to 11 [here](#)
6. [Talk to a Doc with Dr. Danièle Behn Smith: Should I get my child vaccinated?](#)
7. More clinic details [here](#)
8. Kids Boost Immunity [Website](#)

COVID-19 vaccine superhero: Jesse's story



BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority



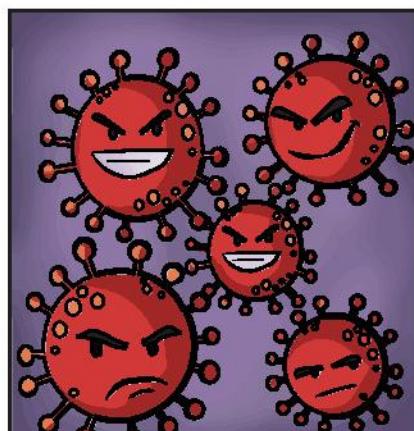
Jesse is going to get a COVID-19 vaccine and is a little nervous.



"Why do I need the COVID-19 vaccine?"



"Vaccines are like a very special kind of a superpower, Jesse!"



"COVID-19 is caused by a virus too tiny to see."



"The vaccine works like an invisible force field which protects you from this virus."



"The vaccine is so powerful, it even helps keep people around you safe."



Jesse brought a favourite toy and used belly breathing to feel calm. There was a tiny pinch on the arm and it was over. "That was easy!"



Jesse is now a COVID-19 vaccine superhero! They are helping to protect their community against the COVID-19 virus.

BOOSTER VS. 3RD DOSE

What is the difference?

Booster

A booster dose is an **additional** COVID-19 vaccine you may get months after your initial vaccine series to boost protection against infection that may have waned over time. A booster gets immunity back up to a desirable level of protection for an extended period of time.

All booster doses will be mRNA vaccines - Moderna or Pfizer

3rd dose

A third dose of COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for some people with compromised immune systems. Some people do not develop a strong immune response from two doses of vaccine because of the use of certain medications and treatments, as well as some health conditions.

For this group, it takes an additional dose to have a reasonable level of immunity and protection against COVID-19.

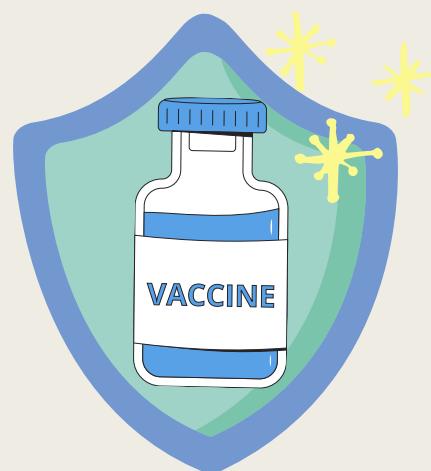
Remember that current vaccines are still very effective at preventing severe disease and death from COVID-19.



If you are unvaccinated, schedule your appointment today!



SOURCE: JOHNS HOPKINS CENTER FOR AMERICAN INDIAN HEALTH



GET VACCINATED FOR COVID-19



Register and book
with the Get
Vaccinated system
[Register here](#)

Other registration and booking options:

- Call: [1-833-838-2323](tel:1-833-838-2323)
- Register in-person at [all Service BC offices](#) (for dose 1&2)

Dose 1&2

Drop in clinics are available, but registration recommended.

Find drop-in clinics for **1st dose COVID-19 vaccinations** in your health authority:

- [Fraser Health](#)
- [Interior Health](#)
- [Island Health](#)
- [Northern Health](#)
- [Vancouver Coastal Health](#)

The AstraZeneca vaccine is only available through pharmacies. You can book an appointment online or by phone at a [pharmacy in your community](#).

List of [Moderna Vaccines in Northeast Pharmacies](#)

Dose 3

- For some people who are moderate to severely immunocompromised.
- for a list of people that are eligible, see [here](#)
- You will receive an invitation by text, email, or phone call through the [Get Vaccinated system](#) about how and when to book a third dose.

No drop-ins

Pediatric Vaccine / Children ages 5-11

- Register your child with [Get Vaccinated](#). Once you've registered, you'll be invited to book an appointment.

No drop-ins

No pediatric vaccines in pharmacies

Booster doses

- Currently, **all Indigenous people 18+** will be invited to book an appointment on the [Get Vaccinated System](#).
- Invitations will be sent out by risk and the date of your second dose.
- If you haven't received a booking invitation, you might not be registered. [Register now](#).
- If you want to get your booster dose at the same time as a family member, you must both book an appointment.

No drop-ins

For more information please visit [here](#).

Find answers to questions about the vaccine and vaccination process on each Health Authority webpage listed here or at immunizebc.ca, or visit [How to get vaccinated for COVID-19](#)

ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES!



**THIS YEAR IN B.C.,
INFLUENZA VACCINE IS FREE
FOR EVERYONE SIX MONTHS
AND OLDER.**

VACCINATION is especially important for people who are at high risk of serious illness from influenza (such as young children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with certain medical conditions) and those able to transmit or spread influenza to those at high risk.

Read more [here](#).

Where to get an influenza vaccine?

- Public health units
- Pharmacies
- Doctors' offices
- Travel clinics

Check the Influenza (flu) clinic locator [here](#).

INFLUENZA

PREVENTION IN ADULTS

Influenza ("flu") is a highly contagious respiratory infection

INFLUENZA SPREADS THROUGH:



- close contact with others
- contact with contaminated surfaces

IT CAN BE SERIOUS FOR SOME ADULTS

At greatest risk of influenza-related complications are adults:



65 years and older



who are pregnant



with a chronic illness



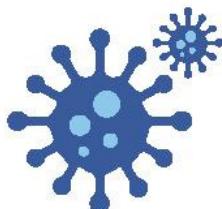
who are Indigenous



residing in nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities

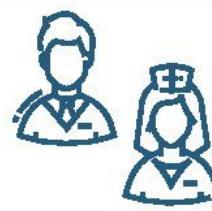
THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON IMMUNIZATION (NACI) RECOMMENDS INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION FOR ADULTS:

- ① 65 years of age and older
- ② at high risk of influenza-related complications or hospitalization, including: heart or lung illness (e.g., asthma), diabetes, cancer or undergoing treatment, kidney disease, anemia, neurologic conditions and morbid obesity
- ③ residing in nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities
- ④ who are pregnant
- ⑤ who are Indigenous
- ⑥ who are capable of spreading influenza to those at high risk, including health care providers, household contacts and people who provide essential community services



New strains of influenza appear every year.

Annual immunization is an effective way to prevent influenza and its complications.

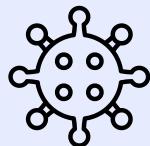


Talk to your doctor, nurse, pharmacist or local public health office about getting immunized against influenza.

BCCDC DATA SUMMARY

2 December 2021

UNVACCINATED
PEOPLE ARE



8 \times more likely to get COVID-19



32 \times more likely to be hospitalized



52 \times more likely to die

The majority of new cases and hospitalizations continue to be among unvaccinated individuals.

Hospitalization rates among children (0-19 years) continue to remain very low

As of Thursday, Dec. 9, 2021, **85.9%** (4,281,608) of eligible people **five and older** in B.C. have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 82.1% (4,094,539) have received their second dose.

COVID-19 **case rates** are decreasing provincially

All health authorities have local health regions with high case rates:

Fraser (FH): Mission

Northern (NH): Terrace, Upper Skeena, Kitimat, Peace River South

Interior (IH): Cariboo/ Chilcotin, North Thompson, Widermere, Summerland

Vancouver Coastal (VCH): Howe Sound

Vancouver Island (VIHA): Cowichan Valley North, Vancouver Island North, Comox Valley

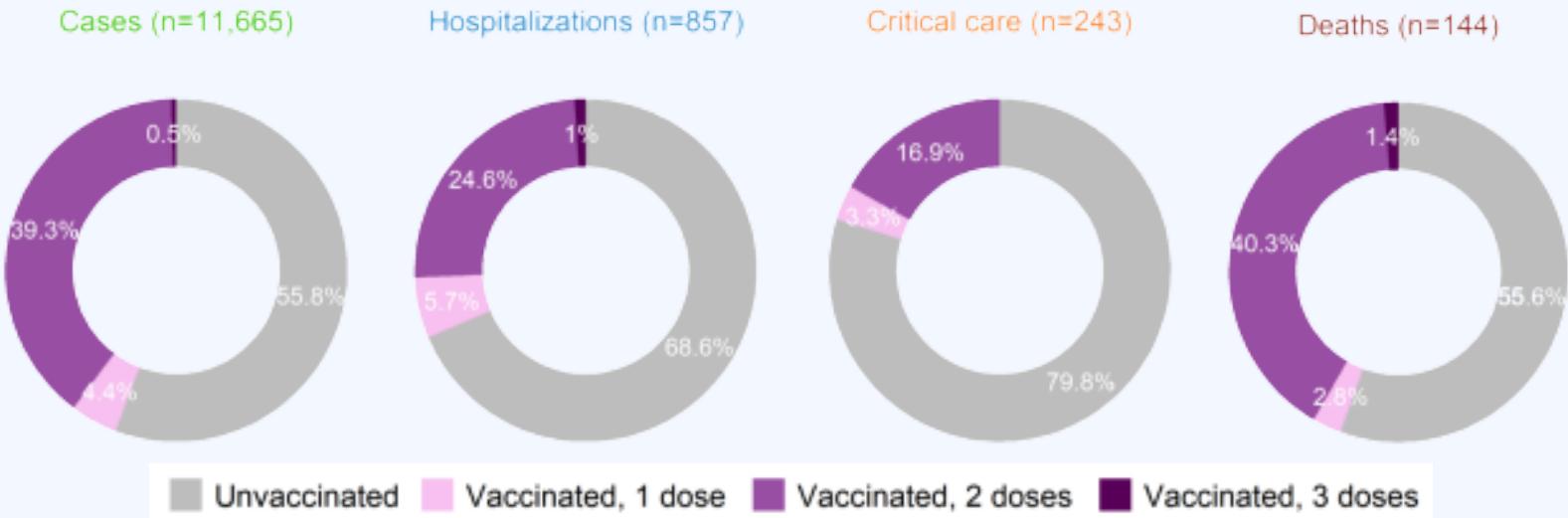
New hospitalizations and percent of people in **hospital/critical care** are declining provincially, but there is regional variation across BC.

New deaths are relatively low and stable.

Regional Restrictions
Additional restrictions for Fraser East, and Northern Health. See [here](#) for more information.

Who is dying from COVID-19 in BC?

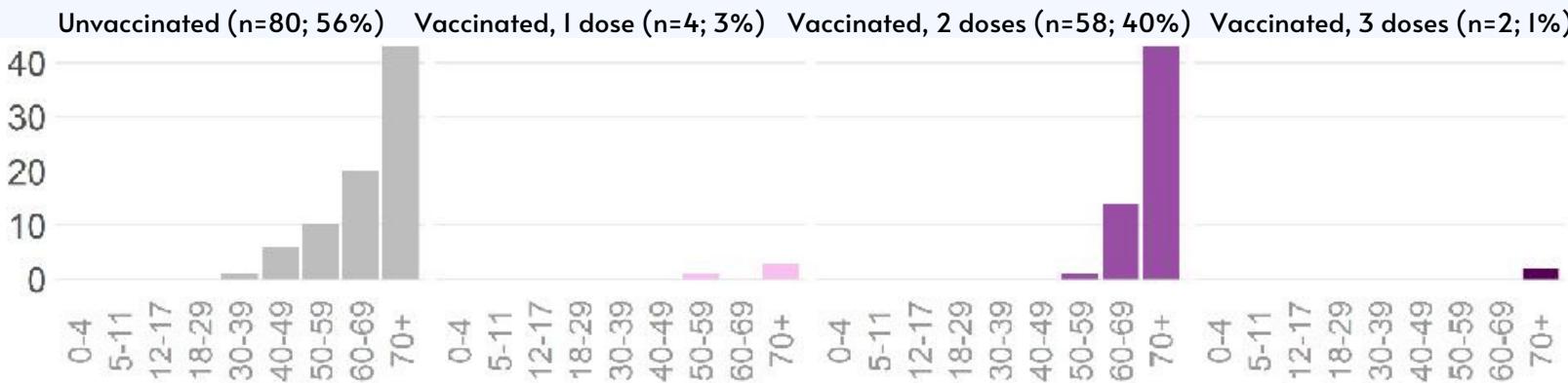
Data includes cases from Nov 03-30, hospitalizations, critical care admissions and deaths from Oct 31-Nov 27, and vaccination statistics on Nov 16, 2021



We see clearly that unvaccinated individuals account for most cases of infection, hospitalizations, critical care, and deaths.

You might be thinking, *then why are almost half the deaths vaccinated people?*

lets take a look at the breakdown of number of deaths



We see that most of the deaths in vaccinated individuals are among older individuals. And we know already know that the risk for severe illness with COVID-19 increases with age. So, let's protect our seniors and Elders by being diligent and getting vaccinated so we have a lower risk of passing COVID-19 onto them.

Added Restrictions for Northern Health

Effective December 1st , 2021 -January 31, 2022

The order will cover all of the Northern Health region



Personal gatherings, both indoor and outdoor, are restricted to fully vaccinated people (12+), including at private residences and vacation accommodation.

- Indoor gathering: up to 10 people or one other household
- Outdoor gathering: up to 25 people



All indoor and outdoor organized events require proof of vaccination required for all participants 12 and over, and COVID-19 safety plan.

- Indoor event (seated): if more than 10 participants, up to 50% operating capacity allowed.
- Indoor (non-seated): Up to 100% standing operating capacity allowed for all other inside events.
- Outdoor event: if over 25 people, up to 50% operating capacity allowed. Physical distancing required.



Restaurants, bars, and nightclubs

- Restaurants, fast-food, and cafés require proof pf vaccination for all dine-in patrons.
- No alcohol service between 10pm-9am
- Bars and nightclubs closed



Worship services:
Virtual services are required. Drive-in permitted.

No in-person worship.



Sport events:
Follows same indoor outdoor restrictions above.
Spectators must be seated. Spectator capacity is limited to 50% seated operating capacity of the venue

Northern Health recognizes MNBC citizenship card as a piece of photo ID.

One year anniversary of the In Plain Sight report

The In Plain Sight report, led by Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, is an investigation into racism in the BC's health care system. The report resulted in 24 recommendations requiring systematic change. Turpel-Lafond said in a recent webinar that "there have been some progress", but a lot more needs to be done for Indigenous women and healthcare.

84% of Indigenous respondents reported some form of discrimination in health care.

52% of Indigenous health care workers reported experiencing racial prejudice at work.

Indigenous women carry the greatest burden.

Read the report here: [Full Report](#); [Summary Report](#); [Data Report](#)



“Métis peoples from across B.C. experience racism when using healthcare. Our people have known this long before the report came out, and I know we will continue to work towards addressing and fixing this problem for the benefit of our people. With guidance from our Creator, our Elders and the Task Force Team, we will continue our work to create a better system for our people.”

- Métis Elder Bryce Mercredi

MNBC will continue to advocate for Métis health and culturally appropriate care. We welcome the work of Indigenous health experts and allied partners to implement the recommendations of the IPS report, together.

ADDITIONAL READING

[MNBC's statement](#)

[Minister Dix's statement](#)

[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 24](#)

BC experiences record high illicit drug toxicity deaths

In the month of October, 201 people died of illicit drug toxicity; this means that on average 6.5 people die per day. 2021 is also the year with the highest illicit drug toxicity deaths where 86.8% of drugs contained illicit fentanyl and analogues.



StopOverdoseBC.ca

Over half (55%) of toxic drug poisonings occurred in private residences.

Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions urges "please do not use alone," and provided a list resources below:

- Download the [Lifeguard app](#)
- Buddy up
- Check your drugs, [by health authority](#)
- Keep Naloxone close
- Find an overdose prevention site or safe consumption site [near you](#).
- visit: stopoverdose.gov.bc.ca
- Updates on toxic drug alerts, click [here](#)

MNBC was part of the working group for the Stop the Stigma campaign. Please visit the website StopOverdoseBC.ca for further information about this campaign.



IF YOU SUSPECT
AN OVERDOSE,
CALL 911 RIGHT
AWAY.

- Call 310-6789 for crisis emotional support, information and resources specific to mental health.
- Call 1 800 784-2433 if you are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including thoughts of suicide.
- Call 1 800 588-8717 for culturally aware crisis support for Indigenous Peoples in B.C.
- Call 1 800 663-1441 for alcohol and drug information and referral.

To learn more:

- Learn more about Harm Reduction [here](#).
- COVID-19 Harm Reduction tips, click [here](#).
- A factsheet on "Responding to Drug Overdoses during COVID-19" [here](#)

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

December 6th marks the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. We remember the lives of the 14 young women at École Polytechnique Montréal.

Women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+, and gender diverse individuals face multiple layers of burden and discrimination. It is alarming to see that with COVID-19 there has been an increase in all types of gender-based violence in Canada.

Let's speak out against all forms of gender-based violence.

Read the [Thanks for Listening: Witnessing Métis Women & Girls Experiences of Violence & Pathways to Healing Report](#) [here](#).

RESOURCES

- 24-Hour Métis Crisis Line toll-free number [1-833-638-4722](#)
- KUU-US Crisis Line Society: Aboriginal-specific 24/7 crisis line serving the entire province. Toll-Free: [1-800-588-8717](#).
 - Youth Line: 250-723-2040. Adult Line: [250-723-4050](#).
- For a list of supports curated by MWBC, see [here](#)
- Call or text VictimLinkBC at [1-800-563-0808](#) or email VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca
- For mental health counselling, emotional support, community-based cultural support services and some assistance with transportation costs, [call 1-877-477-0775](#)
- National Support line for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People [1-844-413-6649](#) (Immediate assistance available 24/7)



MNBC COVID-19 ELDERS TEMPORARY FINANCIAL SUPPORT

MNBC Ministry of Elders is assisting our low-income Métis Elders/Seniors citizens whose income has been impacted by COVID-19 to obtain groceries, household goods or medications.

ELIGIBILITY

Must be a registered Métis Nation BC Citizen. Those who have submitted applications for citizenship and are in the process are considered.

Low-income Métis Elders/Seniors citizens who are 60 years of age or more who are single/widowed/divorced with an income of \$28,150 or less, or married/common-law with an income of \$45,720 or less.

The application must demonstrate how COVID-19 has impacted the applicant's income or ability to obtain groceries, household goods or medications.

Métis Elders/Seniors citizens that are single may qualify for \$500

Métis Elders/Seniors citizens who are married/common-law may qualify for \$750 (partners do not need to be Métis)

To apply visit <https://www.mnbc.ca/portal/login/>
For assistance to apply call 604-557-5851 ext 8226

FLOOD EVACUEES SUPPORT

Photo credit: Canadian Red Cross



Flood evacuees can get \$2,000 direct support

The Province & Canadian Red Cross partnering to provide additional financial assistance to help people meet the immediate needs associated with being evacuated due to flooding.

Financial assistance will be provided by the Red Cross to people whose primary residences have been placed on evacuation orders due to the flooding and extreme weather event that occurred Nov. 14-16, 2021. **Eligible households will receive \$2,000.**

To access these supports, evacuated British Columbians need to register with the Red Cross by calling **1 800 863-6582**, between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. (Pacific time).

Financial assistance provided through the Red Cross will not affect eligibility for supports through the provincial Emergency Support Services (ESS) program.

Provincial helpline for people impacted by recent flooding and landslides **1-833-376-2452**

Information on the safety of drinking-water wells in flooded areas of B.C. [here](#)

More information [here](#)

BC WILDFIRE SUPPORT



BC Coroner wildfire investigation announcements:

- New measures to strengthen BC's ambulance service to ensure its faster and more responsive to British Columbians.
- More support to BC Emergency Health Service
- Need to work on many core issues
 - housing affordability
 - safety and infrastructure
 - income inequality
 - municipal supports and services
 - climate change

Housing support for 2021 wildfire affected residents

The Province is teaming up with Canadian Red Cross to provide eligible residents affected by the 2021 wildfires, with financial assistance to support their interim housing needs during their recovery.

Starting **December 2021**, the Province will provide eligible households with financial assistance of **\$1,300 per month** while they are supported in the transition to long-term housing.

Canadian Red Cross will facilitate this program. They will contact eligible households to assess their unique needs and discuss the next steps to help cover their interim housing needs and find longer-term housing solutions.

Canadian Red Cross is also providing support with housing repair and reconstruction to homeowners who have been unable to return home. Eligible homeowners may receive financial support to help meet their immediate needs, clean up their property and/or assist with expenses related to the repair or rebuilding of their home.

For more information on Canadian Red Cross services and how to access them, call 1 800 863-6582, Monday to Friday, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Pacific time), or visit [here](#).

Métis Nation BC:

MÉTIS HEALTHCARE WORKER FORUM

Event dates are as follows:

- **In-person: Friday January 28 to Sunday January 30, 2021 at the Civic Hotel in Surrey, BC. In person registration closes on January 12th at 12:00 pm PST**
- **Virtual: Wednesday January 26, 2021 at 6PM-8PM on Zoom**

Travel, accommodations, and food will be provided for those attending the in-person event. The MNBC will coordinate all travel and accommodation, and food will be provided on-site.

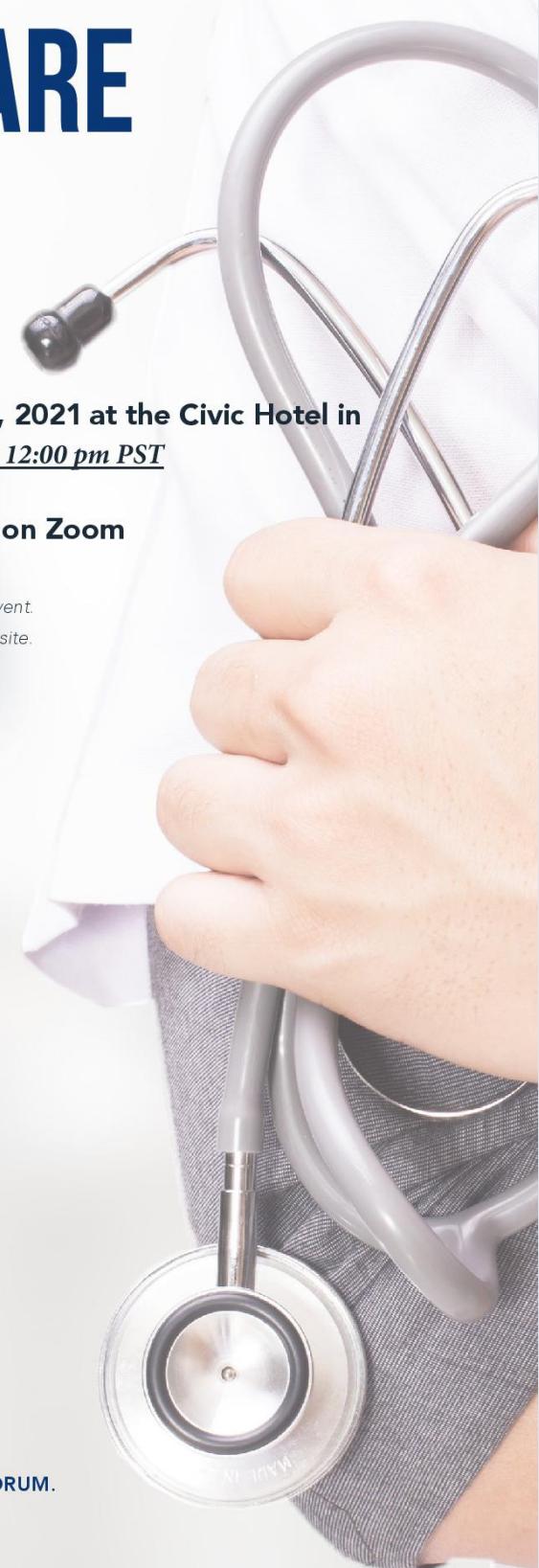
Métis Nation BC (MNBC) is hosting a provincial Métis healthcare worker forum to bring together the Métis voices of supportive care environments and assess what is required to create more culturally responsive supportive care for Métis Elders and seniors. Métis healthcare workers – including home support workers, activity aids, long term care staff, care aides, LPN/RNs, and physicians – are invited to share their perspectives on needs and gaps as it relates to assisted living, respite, extended care, palliation, hospice and other types of supportive care for Métis Elders and seniors.



PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW TO REGISTER FOR THE
MNBC: SUPPORTIVE CARE PROVINCIAL MÉTIS HEALTHCARE WORKER FORUM.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

***IMPORTANT* COVID-19 policies:** As of September 2021, under the Provincial Health Officers Orders, anyone who attends indoor events will need to show proof of at least a single dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. If you are not fully vaccinated (two doses), please register for the virtual event.



Smoking and Vaping Cessation



**WANT TO STOP
SMOKING OR VAPING?**

**WANT TO HELP A
LOVED ONE QUIT?**

The path to freedom from smoking or vaping can be a difficult journey.

MNBC smoking/vaping reduction program is here to help support you every step of the way.

ONE-ON-ONE
COUNSELLING

WRITTEN
RESOURCES

CARBON MONOXIDE
MONITORS

FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE

MONTHLY
DRAWS

**A HEALTHY NATION IS A STRONG NATION.
WE ARE HERE TO HELP.**



**MÉTIS NATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA**

Tobacco/Vaping Reduction Counselling
Lloyd Main RRT, Provincial Tobacco Cessation Specialist
Phone: 250-241-4589 Email: Imain@mnbc.ca



Maarsü Healthcare Workers