

# MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

March 19, 2021

## COVID-19 vaccine appointments available to eligible populations

Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU) and local partners will offer regularly scheduled COVID-19 vaccine clinics across the region starting the week of March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Currently, people born in 1941 or earlier (aged 80 years and older)** can use the new provincial booking system to schedule an appointment. The booking site is found at [www.ontario.ca/bookvaccine](http://www.ontario.ca/bookvaccine). For those without internet access, an appointment can be booked by calling the provincial call centre at 1-833-943-3900. Although there were some technical issues early on, NWHU has worked with the Ministry and most issues have been resolved and wait times are currently low.

**Starting March 22<sup>nd</sup>, the booking system will allow those aged 75+ to book.**

The following populations are also eligible to book a COVID-19 vaccine appointment now:

- **Health care providers** (if not vaccinated in their workplace)
- **Indigenous adults, including Metis**
- **Adult home care recipients**

Indigenous adults including Metis can book an appointment with their local Indigenous Health Care Provider or Health Access Centre or at a NWHU-led clinic. Contact information for these organizations can be found on [NWHU's booking webpage](#).

To register for a NWHU-led clinic, the groups listed above must complete [this survey](#) to register. If eligible, the Ministry then sends a code to use via email to book an appointment. This process can take a few days. Those who have already completed the survey and are awaiting a code from the Ministry should check their junk mail or spam folders as well as their settings as many emails are being flagged as spam.

By early April, there will be a rotating schedule of community vaccine clinics offered in 13 communities in the NWHU's catchment area. Clinics will be offered in 12 communities every two weeks, and in Kenora every week. All clinics will be open to specific priority groups consistent with the Province's vaccine rollout plan and are by appointment only. NWHU will be offering evening and weekend clinic hours and will add additional clinics to the schedule based on local need, capacity and vaccine availability.

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Due to COVID-19 prevention measures, there will be no drop-in clinics.

The public is reminded that anyone who is pregnant, has an auto-immune disorder, is immunocompromised, or has had a severe allergic reaction to an mRNA vaccine or to any of its components, must talk to their health care provider before getting the COVID-19 vaccine. It is recommended that you consult with them as soon as possible to ensure that you will be ready to receive your vaccine when it is offered to you.

For more information, please visit [www.nwhu.on.ca/covid19](http://www.nwhu.on.ca/covid19) or [www.ontario.ca/covidvaccine](http://www.ontario.ca/covidvaccine).

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*A reminder to the media that Dr. Kit Young Hoon hosts online COVID-19 media briefings every Tuesday, 1:30 pm CT and Friday, 10:00 am CT as well as Q&A sessions for the public every second Thursday, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm CT. If you do not have a link to the media briefings, please email [jbegg@nwhu.on.ca](mailto:jbegg@nwhu.on.ca).*