

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, January 12, 2021

Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine arrives in Niagara; Vaccinations begin tomorrow

Needles will begin going into arms Wednesday, January 13, as Niagara Health (NH) and Niagara Region Public Health and Emergency Services (NRPH&ES) start administering the COVID-19 vaccine to healthcare workers, essential caregivers, as well as residents at long-term care and high-risk retirement homes.

The region's first shipment of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine arrived in St. Catharines on Tuesday, January 12.

"This is the day we've all been waiting for and a turning point in Niagara's pandemic response," said Lynn Guerriero, President and Interim CEO of Niagara Health. "The sharp increase of COVID-19 activity in our hospital and community is serious, and these vaccines are critical to save lives and protect hospital services. Over the next three weeks, we'll be working with NRPH&ES to vaccinate more than 11,000 people in Niagara."

Niagara Health will start with vaccinating hospital staff and physicians who work with COVID-positive patients. Additionally, Niagara Health will vaccinate healthcare workers of long-term care, high-risk retirement homes, as well as essential caregivers at a COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic located at the hospital's St. Catharines Site. Niagara Region Public Health will deploy small teams to long-term care homes and high-risk retirement homes to support their staff vaccinating residents under their care.

The provincial guidelines prioritize who receives the vaccine using a risk-based framework, and groups to receive doses will continually expand over the coming months, and based on vaccine availability.

- In the first phase, until end of March 2021, we plan to vaccinate other high-risk groups, including adults in First Nations, Métis and Inuit populations, and adult chronic home care recipients.
- In April to July 2021, the second phase, high-risk older adults and other at risk populations will be identified for vaccination in Niagara.
- Vaccination for the general public is planned for the third phase of the provincial framework for vaccine distribution, likely in August 2021.

"It is imperative that we vaccinate healthcare workers and our most vulnerable as soon as possible," says Ms. Guerriero. "Niagara Health will continue to partner with Niagara Region Public Health to advocate for more vaccines to support our community."



For information on the province's vaccine implementation plan: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-vaccine-distribution-implementation-plan>

For updates on Niagara's Vaccination Clinic: niagarahealth.on.ca/vaccinationclinic.

Media Contacts:

Niagara Health
Mary Taws, Senior Communications Specialist
289-968-1164
Mary.Taws@niagarahealth.on.ca

Niagara Region Public Health
Meredith Maxwell, Manager, Public Health Communications & Engagement
905-688-8248, ext. 7476
Meredith.Maxwell@niagararegion.ca