

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force

General (Ret'd) Rick Hillier
Chair

25 Grosvenor Street
11th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 1Y6

COVID-19VaccineTaskForce@ontario.ca

Groupe d'étude sur la distribution des vaccins contre la COVID-19

Général (à la retraite) Rick Hillier
Président

25, rue Grosvenor
11^e étage
Toronto ON M7A 1Y6

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We have entered the month of February in a different set of circumstances than we anticipated being in only a few weeks ago. As you know, ongoing vaccine shipment delays and reduced shipments have forced us to pivot from the plan we had made for larger shipments of vaccines. However, a pivot does not mean that we have changed our goals. Quite the opposite – it has given us the opportunity to prove that we can re-focus our efforts when needed, while continuing to work on logistics and plans to be ready when the vaccines do arrive.

To support this, we have been holding Knowledge Sharing Sessions (KSS) with public health units. These sessions are meant to provide an opportunity for public health units to showcase their integrated delivery plans and strengthen mutual understanding by sharing best practices and findings and by identifying and discussing where provincial supports and resources may be needed.

Due to the delay in vaccine shipments, we updated our goal of completing the administration of first doses of COVID-19 vaccines to residents in each long-term care, high-risk retirement and First Nations elder care homes from February 5 to February 10. However, at the time of this memo, we have been able to offer first doses to residents in over 80% of the homes. The moment the vaccines are delivered this week, teams in public health units will move immediately to get them into the remaining homes.

We are also excited to report that vaccination teams will be distributing vaccines in 31 First Nations fly-in communities in the north as part of Operation Remote Immunity. In fact, 1,551 total doses were administered during the soft launch of this operation, between January 8 and January 29, 2021. When Operation Remote Immunity was officially launched this week, 1,363 doses were administered between February 1 and 3, 2021. This first step begins our journey towards protection for remote First Nations communities.

The continued collaboration between municipal, community, and health system partners and the determination to achieve our common goals has steered us through these past few weeks and remains the key to our success.

Sincerely,

General (Ret'd) Rick Hillier
Chair of the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force