

# Coronavirus Vaccine Won't Be Available In Kawartha Lakes Until 2021

By **Pamela Vanmeer** - December 18, 2020



*Photo by Artem Podrez from Pexels*

KAWARTHA LAKEThe Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit says the new Coronavirus vaccine will come to Kawartha Lakes some time in 2021.

limited supply of COVID-19 vaccines is currently available and is being provided to high-risk groups first, as was identified by the Province of Ontario.

"As the supply of COVID-19 vaccine increases, the Ontario government will make the vaccine

more widely available in 2021, including in the City of Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland County and Haliburton County." Acting Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Ian Gemmill told Kawartha 411 News. "The Health Unit is working closely with the Province and local health care partners to ensure a safe and efficient rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine in this region."

Gemmill said the provincial government will be setting priorities for the rollout of the vaccine in regions with the highest rates of COVID-19 infection, including those in the Red-Control and Lockdown zones. The immunization program will focus on health care workers and the most vulnerable populations in those regions first.

"While the province continues to roll out its phased vaccination program and with the holiday season upon us, it remains critically important that everyone continue following public health advice to protect our communities and most vulnerable populations, and to stop the spread of COVID-19." Gemmill stated.

That means:

- Staying home when ill
- Avoiding non-essential travel, especially to high-risk areas
- Celebrating the holiday only with people within our immediate households
- Wearing a mask that covers our nose and mouth
- Practising physical distancing
- Washing out hands frequently and thoroughly.

Ontario announced today it will be distributing additional doses of the Pfizer vaccine to 17 more hospital sites over the next two weeks, including regions with the highest rates of COVID-19 infection. This is part of the initial phase of the government's [three-phase vaccine implementation plan](#) that began on December 14 with the initial vaccinations administered at Toronto's University Health Network (UHN), followed by the launch of the pilot project at UHN and The Ottawa Hospital on December 15.

Ontario is expecting to receive up to 90,000 Pfizer-BioNTech doses from the federal government before the end of the year to continue vaccinating health care workers and essential caregivers who work in hospitals, long-term care homes, retirement homes and other congregate settings caring for seniors. To prepare for the rollout of these next shipments, the following 17 hospital sites will be receiving the vaccine in addition to UHN and The Ottawa Hospital:

- Windsor Regional Hospital
- London Health Sciences Centre
- Grand River Hospital
- Halton Healthcare
- Hamilton Health Sciences
- William Osler Health System
- Trillium Health Partners
- Southlake Regional Health Centre
- Mackenzie Health
- Humber River Hospital
- Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre
- Toronto East Health Network
- Unity Health Toronto
- Scarborough Health Network
- Lakeridge Health
- Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre
- Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre

“Following a successful pilot, we are excited to continue onto the next stage of our rollout of the COVID-19 vaccines to Ontarians,” said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. “While we are planning to ensure that everyone who wants a vaccine will receive one, we need first protect our frontline workers and those providing essential care to our most vulnerable.”

All of these sites already have the equipment necessary to safely store the Pfizer vaccine at -70 degrees and the required staff are ready to receive and administer vaccines. Since this vaccine cannot be transferred beyond the initial delivery location at this time, vaccinations will continue to be administered to health care workers in high-risk settings first, such as long-term care homes and hospitals. Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre was selected to test the travel logistics in Northern Ontario and support the administration of the vaccine to Indigenous and remote communities.

### **Pamela Vanmeer**

Pamela VanMeer is a two time winner of the prestigious Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) Award. Her investigative reports on abuse in Long Term Care Homes garnered international attention for the issue and won the Ron Laidlaw Award. She is a former reporter and anchor at CHEX News, now Global Peterborough and helped launch the New CHEX Daily, a daily half hour talk show. While at CHCH News in Hamilton she covered some of the biggest news stories of the day.