

Vaccination Clinics Planned For Long Term Care Homes Rescheduled After Delay in Product Delivery

By Pamela Vanmeer - January 29, 2021



Photo by Artem Podrez from Pexels

KAWARTHA LAKES-The local Health Unit will be rescheduling upcoming vaccination clinics planned for area long term care homes after learning of a delay in the next vaccine delivery.

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit (HKPR) received its first shipment of Moderna vaccine on Monday. It was expecting its next delivery of Moderna vaccine on February 1 but has learned the next shipment will not arrive until at least February 5. This delay means that clinics scheduled for next week to vaccinate the residents of long-term care homes, high-risk retirement homes, and a senior's housing facility in Alderville will all need to be rescheduled.

"It's unfortunate, but not unexpected," said Dr. Ian Gemmill, Acting Medical Officer of Health for the HKPR District Health Unit. "We know all areas of the province are experiencing delays, so all we can do is continue to plan our clinics and wait until we receive the vaccine that we need."

Since receiving the 700 doses of Moderna on Monday, HKPR staff have been working with area long-term care homes to vaccinate residents. It is expected that all of the doses will be in arms by the end of today, Dr. Gemmill said.

Once the vaccine has been transported to a clinic and thawed, it cannot be put back in the freezer, refrigerated, stored or transported to another clinic. As the vaccine must be used once opened, Dr. Gemmill said that some health care workers at long-term care homes where vaccination clinics have been held also have been vaccinated. This has occurred once all of the residents were vaccinated and there was leftover vaccine, so that no vaccine is wasted. The staff of long-term care homes are next on the list for vaccine.

"Our goal is to ensure that all of the residents of these facilities are vaccinated, but there may times when we have vaccine doses left over after a clinic," Dr. Gemmill said. "In those cases, we are also vaccinating some of the health care workers in those facilities."

HKPR has not been informed how many vaccine doses it will receive on or after February 5, but it has been told not to expect another delivery until at least February 22 explained officials.

Once more vaccine does arrive locally, HKPR will continue with its plan to vaccinate residents of long-term care homes, high-risk retirement homes and a senior's housing facility in Alderville. After that, vaccination of the staff, essential caregivers, and health care workers will take place.

Based on the province's vaccine distribution plan, the next phase of vaccinations will focus on older adults living in the community and eventually all members of the community who wish to be vaccinated. This phase is expected to take place later in the spring or early summer.

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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.

