

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force

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

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We have reached a major milestone - over 1,000,000 doses of vaccines have been administered in Ontario. While we should reflect on how far we have come, we must not stop pushing forward as this is only the beginning of the journey. There are many more vaccinations to administer to reach our goal of ensuring that every eligible Ontarian who wants a vaccine, receives one.

Ontario has reached another key milestone in protecting remote and isolated Indigenous communities against COVID-19, having visited all 31 fly-in northern communities and Moosonee to offer first doses of the vaccine as part of Operation Remote Immunity (ORI).

ORI is led by Ornge and was co-developed in partnership with the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) to ensure engagement of Indigenous leadership in how vaccines are offered to their communities.

ORI was officially launched on February 1, 2021 and aims to complete its work by the end of April 2021. The vaccine is being offered to community members 18 years of age or older. As of March 8, 2021, a total of 15,960 doses (12,843 first doses and 3,117 second doses) of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in Sioux Lookout and communities in scope for ORI. Administration of second doses has been completed in seven communities and is currently underway in nine more communities this week.

With vaccine supply stabilizing and over two million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine expected from the federal government before the end of March, the province will enter Phase Two of its vaccine rollout. Between April 2021 and July 2021, up to nine million Ontarians will be vaccinated.

During Phase Two, groups that will receive the vaccine include:

- Older adults between 60-79 years of age;
- Individuals with specific health conditions and some primary caregivers;
- People who live and work in congregate settings and some primary caregivers;
- People who live in hot spots with high rates of death, hospitalizations and transmission; and
- Certain workers who cannot work from home.

REFERRAL TO _____

RECOMMENDED

DIRECTION REQUIRED _____

RECEIPT RECOMMENDED _____

For more detailed information on the priority groups, please visit:

<https://news.ontario.ca/en/backgrounder/60570/populations-eligible-for-phase-two-covid-19-vaccination>

Starting March 15th, the province will launch an online booking system and a provincial customer service desk to answer questions and support appointment bookings at mass immunization clinics. This will initially support individuals over the age of 80 as part of Phase One, eventually extending to more groups during Phase Two. While some public health units are currently using their own booking systems to vaccinate individuals aged 80 and over, it is anticipated that most public health units will transition to the provincial booking system after it has launched.

With the approval of the AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD and Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccines, and increased supplies coming into the province, we will be able to ramp up the number of doses administered daily. As supply increases, Ontarians will be able to get vaccinated in several new settings. In addition to hospitals, mobile clinics and mass vaccination clinics, the province is working with the pharmacy sector and with primary care professionals to offer vaccinations in primary care settings and community locations in collaboration with public health units.

NACI has provided the recommendation to extend the vaccination dose interval up to four months for all Health Canada approved COVID-19 vaccines while maintaining a strong and sustained level of protection from the virus. This news along with the approval of new vaccines will help us to reforecast and maximize the number of people receiving a first dose in a shorter timeframe, pending supply from the federal government. Ontario has accepted and will follow NACI's recommendations starting March 10th, with some limited exceptions.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and leadership in our efforts.

Sincerely,

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

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force Update #9

Vaccine Update

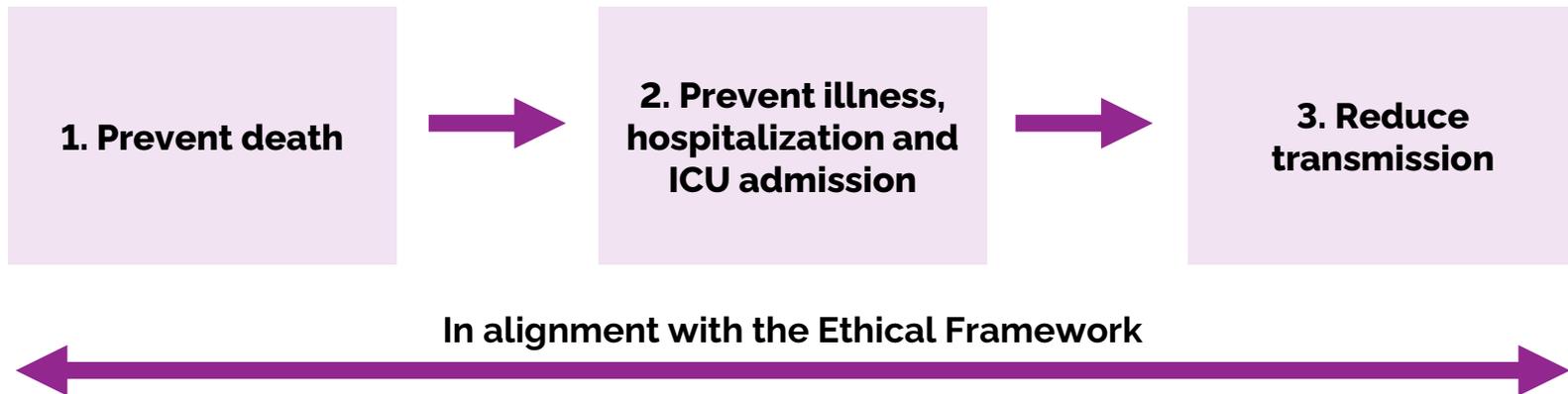
- Over **1,019,407** doses administered across the province.
- As of March 7, 2021, all adults in the 31 fly-in First Nations communities and Moosonee have been offered their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and second doses have commenced in some communities.
- As of March 8, 2021, Operation Remote Immunity has administered 15,960 doses, including 12,843 first doses and 3,117 second doses.
- As part of its commitment to ensure an equitable vaccine rollout, Ontario will begin collecting sociodemographic data on a voluntary basis from individuals who get the COVID-19 vaccine starting Friday, March 5, 2021. Collecting this data will help the province have a more complete picture of who is being vaccinated, help ensure access to the vaccine for communities who are at-risk and disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and ensure that everyone who wants to be vaccinated is being reached.

Ontario's COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan

- Ontario's COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan is happening in three phases
- This phased approach is based on expert advice of the Ministers' COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force and is aligned with the National Advisory Committee on Immunization
- The vaccination rollout is currently in Phase One, with over 1,019,407 doses administered (as of March 10, 8 p.m.)
- The first phase of Ontario's plan focused on vaccinating the province's most vulnerable. We are now seeing the clear benefit of doing so, with a dramatic decrease in long-term care home cases and COVID-related deaths across all age groups
- Ontario has mapped out the transition into Phase Two of our vaccine plan and has identified the next groups of populations who will be eligible to receive the vaccine
- The timeline for Ontario's three-phase vaccination distribution plan is dependent on vaccine supply and availability from the federal government
- As additional vaccines are approved by Health Canada and Ontario receives doses more regularly, the province will significantly increase the number of vaccines being administered daily

Objectives of Ontario's Vaccine Rollout

Ontario's COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan is guided by the following objectives:



These objectives align with Canada's pandemic response goal, which is also adopted by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization:

"To minimize serious illness and overall deaths while minimizing societal disruption as a result of COVID".

Phase Two: Expanding Vaccines to More Ontarians

Vaccine Supply Update

Over the coming weeks, Ontario expects to receive more vaccines from the federal government, allowing the province to map out the transition to Phase Two of the rollout, which expands to more Ontarians.

- **Pfizer-BioNTech**

- March 1 and 8: 173,160 doses each week
- March 15 and 22: 174,330 doses each week
- March 29: 175,500 doses
- April 5 and 12: 298,350 doses each week

- **Moderna**

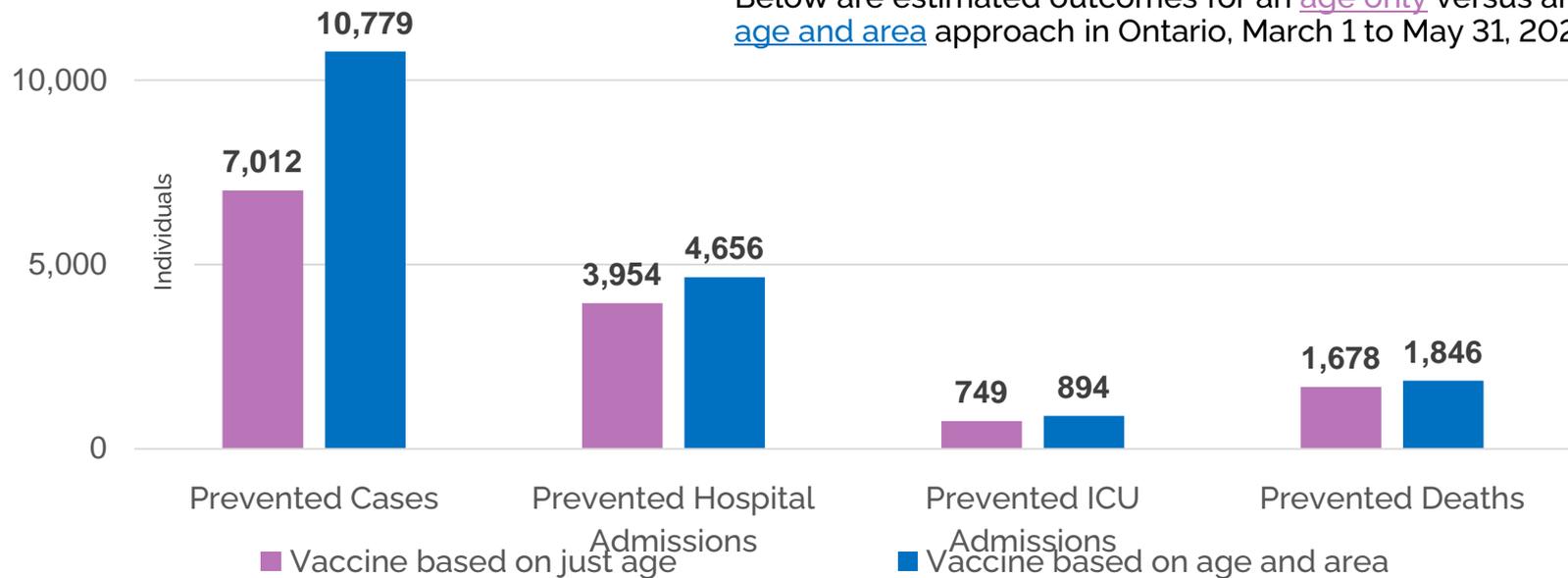
- Week of March 8: 160,500 doses
- Week of March 22: 323,200 doses

- Ontario has received 194,500 doses of AstraZeneca the week of March 8, 2021

Evidence (Vaccinating by Age and Area)

Vaccinating primarily based on age, with some adjustment for hot spots (and health conditions, congregate settings), will prevent more deaths, hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and cases of COVID-19.

Below are estimated outcomes for an [age only](#) versus an [age and area](#) approach in Ontario, March 1 to May 31, 2021.



Source: Ontario COVID-19 Science Advisory Table

Phase Two (April 2021 – July 2021)

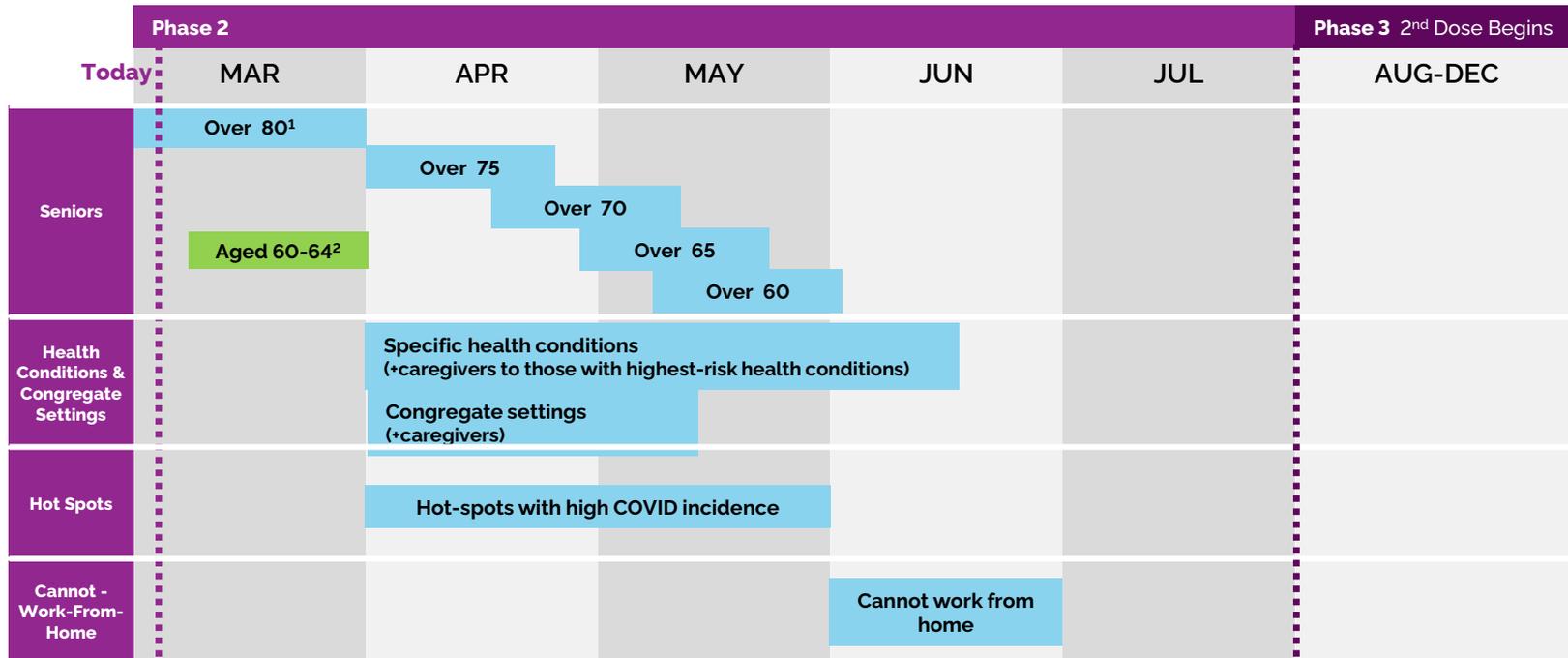
Following the best scientific evidence, phase two of Ontario's vaccination distribution plan will continue vaccinating the population based on **age and risk** to prevent further death, hospitalization and transmission:

Relative Emphasis	1. AGE	Population Size
	Seniors Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older Ontarians (60-79), who are at greatest risk of death and hospitalization due to COVID-19, will be targeted through a multi-channel approach. 	2.5 Million
	2. AT-RISK	
	Health Conditions and Congregate Settings Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health conditions: A targeted rollout, leveraging primary care and speciality clinics, to vaccinate individuals with specific health conditions (e.g., transplants) and some primary caregivers. Congregate settings: Targeted outreach to staff, residents and some caregivers in high-risk congregate settings to prevent further deaths and outbreaks. 	Health Conditions 2.9 Million Congregate Settings Strategy 0.2 Million
	Hot Spot Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHUs will apply their local expertise and evidence to target based on age and risk; Some PHUs will receive additional doses to also target ongoing hot spots with high rates of death, hospitalization and transmission². Vaccinations in hot spots will continue to focus on age. 	0.9 Million
	Cannot-Work-From-Home Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep workers safe, and protect essential services, by vaccinating those who cannot work from home. The workers who cannot work from home (see appendix for list of the sectors) will receive vaccines at the end of Phase 2 (anticipated July 2021 dependent on supply). 	2.5 Million*

8 *The workers' population estimate does not remove double counting (i.e., some workers may get vaccinated through any one of the strategies above).

Phase Two Sequencing

The timelines for completing Phase Two and vaccinating the general population in Phase Three are dependent on several factors awaiting clarification at this time, including vaccine supply and uptake which is estimated at 75%. **The sequencing below can be applied in any vaccine supply scenario.**



Pfizer/Moderna, assumed dosage interval of 4 months.

In decreasing age bands will be offered AstraZeneca (older adults may also choose to access this vaccine).

9 ¹ In addition to other phase 1, populations: Residents, staff, essential caregivers (including family caregivers) and other employees in congregated living settings for seniors; Frontline HCWs; Adults in First Nations, Métis and Inuit populations; and Adult recipients of chronic home health care.

² Including some caregivers of those with specific health conditions.

Eligible Health Conditions

Individuals with the following health conditions will be vaccinated in Phase 2:

Highest-risk (442K)

- Organ transplant recipients
- Hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients
- People with neurological diseases in which respiratory function may be compromised (e.g., motor neuron disease, myasthenia gravis, multiple sclerosis)
- Haematological malignancy diagnosed <1 year
- Kidney disease eGFR< 30

High-risk (292K)

- Obesity (BMI > 40)
- Other treatments causing immunosuppression (e.g., chemotherapy, immunity- weakening medications)
- Intellectual or developmental disabilities (e.g., Down Syndrome)

At-risk (2.2M)

- Immune deficiencies/ autoimmune disorders
- Stroke/cerebrovascular disease
- Dementia
- Diabetes
- Liver disease
- All other cancers
- Respiratory diseases
- Spleen problems
- Heart disease
- Hypertension with end organ damage
- Diagnosis of mental disorder
- Substance use disorders
- Thalassemia
- Pregnancy
- Immunocompromising health conditions
- Other disabilities requiring direct support care in the community

Hot Spots

Populations across all public health units at greatest risk will receive vaccinations in Phase 2; however, 13 public health units will receive additional doses (up to 920k) to target **historic and ongoing hot spots** with high rates of death, hospitalization and transmission. Note these do not correspond to the COVID-19 Response Framework.

To identify hot spots, PHUs will use their local knowledge and expertise, as well as provincial data and information from the Science Table.

- Durham
- Halton
- Hamilton
- Niagara
- Ottawa
- Peel
- Simcoe Muskoka
- Waterloo
- Wellington Dufferin Guelph
- Windsor Essex
- York
- Toronto
- South West

Older adults in these regions may be vaccinated earlier in Phase Two than older individuals in non-hot spots given evidence of increased risk of death, severe illness and hospitalization in these regions.

Congregate Settings

At-risk staff, essential caregivers and residents (158K) from the following list of congregate settings will be vaccinated in Phase 2:

- Supportive housing
- Developmental services / intervenor and supported independent living (SIL)
- Emergency homeless shelters
- Other homeless populations not in shelters
- Mental health and addictions congregate settings
- Homes for special care
- Violence Against Women (VAW) shelters and Anti-Human Trafficking (AHT) residents
- Children's residential facilities
- Youth justice facilities
- Indigenous healing and wellness
- Provincial and demonstration schools
- On-farm temporary foreign workers
- Bail beds & Indigenous bail beds
- Adult correctional facilities

Caregivers in select congregate care settings:

- Developmental services, mental health and addictions congregate settings, homes for special care, children's residential facilities, and Indigenous healing and wellness will be vaccinated as part of the vaccine roll-out in congregate settings
- These caregivers would be vaccinated at the same time as residents and staff in congregate settings using a programmatic approach

Essential Caregivers

Essential Caregivers (400k) will be vaccinated in Phase Two:

- These are primary caregivers to those with highest-risk health conditions (1 primary caregiver); i.e., Organ transplant recipients, Hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients, Neurological diseases in which respiratory function may be compromised, Haematological malignancy diagnosed <1 year, Kidney disease eGFR < 30
- These caregivers would be vaccinated at the end of Phase 2 (at the same time as workers who cannot work from home)

Cannot Work From Home

Workers who cannot work from home in the following sectors will receive vaccines at the end of Phase Two:

First group of workers unable to work remotely (730K) to be vaccinated in parallel:

- Elementary/ secondary school staff
- Workers responding to critical events (e.g., police, fire, compliance, funeral, special constables)
- Childcare and licenced foster care workers
- Food manufacturing workers
- Agriculture and farm workers

Remaining workers unable to work remotely (1.4M) to be vaccinated in parallel:

- High-risk and critical retail workers (grocery and pharmacies)
- Remaining manufacturing labourers
- Social workers (incl. youth justice)
- Courts and justice system workers (incl. probation and parole)
- Lower-risk retail workers (wholesalers, general goods)
- Transportation, warehousing and distribution
- Energy, telecom (data and voice), water and wastewater management
- Financial services
- Waste management
- Mining, oil and gas workers

AstraZeneca: Protecting Older Ontarians

- Aligned with NACI recommendations, Ontario will begin offering AstraZeneca to **populations aged 60-64**, with decreasing age in small age bands at pharmacies, primary care, mass clinics or other suitable sites
- Starting with populations aged 60-64 is also aligned with the latest evidence that recommends vaccinating primarily based on age. Doing so will help reduce illness and hospitalizations
- AstraZeneca will be offered with **informed consent**, including discussion about current vaccine options, information about efficacy, and the timing of future vaccine options

Vaccine Booking System & Call Centre

Pilot Regions

- oKingston, Frontenac, and Lennox and Addington
- oPeterborough County-City
- oHastings and Prince Edward Counties
- oLeeds, Grenville, and Lanark
- oGrey Bruce
- oLambton

Pilot progress to date

- The testing of the booking system began Monday with eligible citizens of the Kingston and Lambton Health Units being the first to be invited to book online vaccine appointments
- Peterborough and Leeds, Grenville and Lanark Health Units began testing the booking system on Tuesday; Grey Bruce and Hastings Prince Edward Counties Health Units began testing on Wednesday
- As of March 8th, 1006 appointments booked for 503 patients.
- Although still early, the pilot of the booking system is sufficiently supporting appointment bookings and integrating with COVax_{ON}