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**FIRST NATIONS WILL RECEIVE COVID-19 VACCINES**

(Treaty 6 Territory, Saskatoon SK) –The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) Executive applauds the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, which will now be available to First Nations throughout Saskatchewan through a joint memorandum between Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), Saskatchewan Ministry of Health and the Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority (NITHA). The vaccination program will provide direct allocation of the COVID-19 vaccines for an effective and culturally supportive vaccine campaign in First Nations communities.

“First Nations are in the highest risk category for the COVID-19 virus and our vaccinations should be top priority” says PAGC Grand Chief Brian Hardlotte. “This leverages existing First Nations vaccine distribution in Saskatchewan. First Nations will receive 14 percent of the provincial Covid-19 vaccine dose allocations for distribution.”

“We’re happy to hear that our members will have access to the vaccine” says MLTC Tribal Chief Richard Ben. “The COVID-19 variants are on the rise in Saskatchewan and have become a huge concern for our First Nation communities. This will help ease some of the worries that our members currently face.”

“We’re breathing a sigh of relief with this announcement and welcome the news that all of our community memers will have vaccines made available to them” says FSIN Vice Chief David Pratt. “This vaccine allocation will assist every First Nations member to the COVID-19 vaccine as they become eligible and that includes urban members as well.”

“We welcome the news that the COVID-19 vaccines will be allocated for First Nations, as we have a Treaty Right to Health through the Medicine Chest Clause” says FSIN Chief Bobby Cameron. “We have been advocating for First Nations to receive direct allocations of the COVID-19 vaccine. We will continue to strive for Treaty implementation during this world-wide pandemic, so that all First Nations are protected through the Famine and Pestilence Clause that is affirmed in our Treaties.”

The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations represents 74 First Nations in Saskatchewan. The Federation is committed to honouring the spirit and intent of the Treaties, as well as the promotion, protection and implementation of the Treaty promises that were made more than a century ago.

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