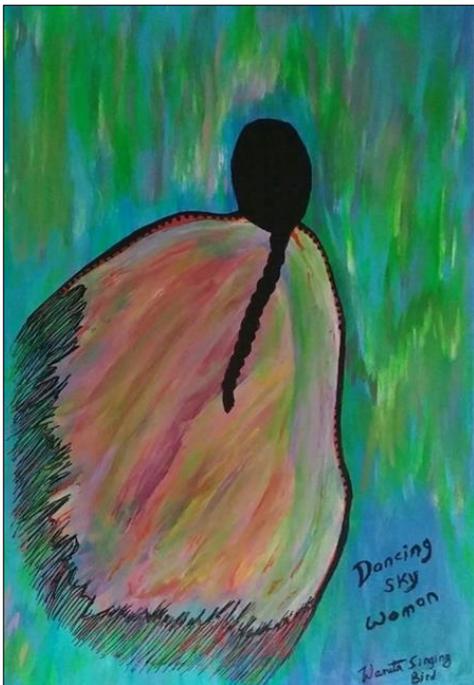


First Nations & Métis Community Guide COVID-19



Cover Image: Wanita Bird

April 09, 2020

First Nations & Métis Health

Message from Saskatchewan Health Authority

The Saskatchewan Health Authority acknowledges Saskatchewan as the traditional territory of First Nations and Métis people, which includes Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10.

Throughout Saskatchewan, Canada and the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented health challenges. All of us share real and valid concerns about the health of our families, friends and communities, especially our aging parents and relatives.

As has been said many times, we are in this together. Our actions right now matter enormously to ensure we emerge from this time with as few casualties and difficulties as possible.

We strongly remind people to practice proper hygiene and social distancing as described in this guide and find information from the links provided. Please stay home and make sure you are two metres (about two arm lengths) away from other people.

We would like to acknowledge the incredible work of our health care providers who are risking their health daily to ensure people are receiving the best care possible. So too, we thank our partners, including all Saskatchewan First Nations, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S), Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN), Tribal Councils, Métis locals and other community health organizations and individuals who are working tirelessly to help overcome the devastating effects this pandemic has and will continue to bring.

By working together we will come through this time with renewed pride and strength.

Gabe Lafond - Executive Director
First Nations and Métis Health

Beth Vachon- Vice President
Quality, Safety and Strategy



Cover image: Wanita Bird is a Cree/Métis woman with Saulteaux, Anishinaabe and Dakota bloodlines. She was given a dream from the seven grandmothers about her art. The name of this piece, *Dancing Sky Woman*, came to her after she completed the painting and was affirmed when she later heard stories about a dancing sky woman.

Knowledge Keepers Teachings

As First Nations and Métis families, we have strong social values. Our ancestors structured their communities to ensure the health and well-being of the whole community. No one individual took priority over the survival of family or community, meaning everyone had the opportunity to contribute their thoughts regarding community issues. Decision making was all-inclusive, but it was the community leaders, medicine men or ceremonial leaders who were looked to for final approval of community decisions. As First Nations and Métis people, we are raised to uphold these social values. We have all heard our mothers and fathers tell us to always respect our elders. We have learned this means that we do whatever it takes to look after them (this generally means to work with them and acquire their knowledge). If we take care of our elders, our communities will be strong.

In this time of the COVID-19 pandemic it is our responsibility to look after Mother Earth through ceremonies, as best as we can. We model for all of Saskatchewan on how we can continue to live by our values while working with the province to respect and battle COVID-19. Today COVID-19 is our enemy. It is important, however, not to fear it. We need to respect this virus as an enemy, in the same way that our ancestors respected their enemies. This means we take our fear of the virus and turn it into a courageous, organized front, drawing on all our resources and traditional healing ways, including traditional medicines. We recognize the damage COVID-19 can cause in our families and communities but understand we need to maintain our social and family values. With this courage, we can be creative in how we can connect with our families and communities and still protect one another from the virus.

We can work together with Public Health and the Saskatchewan Health Authority by following the guidelines on social distancing and effective hand washing practices. We know that by doing this we continue to ensure the health and well-being of our families and communities.

March 31, 2020
Traditional Knowledge Keepers Advisory Council
First Nations and Métis Health

Stay Safe

Stay Healthy

First Nations & Métis Health

First Nations and Métis Health (FNMH) is tasked with establishing strong relationships with First Nations & Métis people and communities to improve cultural safety and improve health outcomes for Indigenous populations. FNMH is working to improve the flow of information to First Nations and Métis communities in Saskatchewan regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. FNMH is part of the four provincial Integrated Health Incident Command Centres (IHICC) working to address questions and concerns about COVID-19. FNMH is also working collaboratively with leaders from the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN), Tribal Councils, First Nations, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and the provincial Ministry of Health to support pandemic planning and to provide communication updates on COVID-19.

For more information, please contact the FNMH leads for SHA:

North	Elaine Malbeuf	Elaine.Malbeuf@saskhealthauthority.ca	(306) 236-1560
Saskatoon	Yvonne Tessier	Yvonne.Tessier@saskhealthauthority.ca	(306) 514-8572
Rural	Talia Pfefferle	Talia.Pfefferle@saskhealthauthority.ca	(306) 280-2940
Regina	Leanne McLaughlin	Leanne.Mclaughlin@saskhealthauthority.ca	(306) 766-4889

First Nations & Métis Health Services can provide guidance regarding transportation needs to and from the hospital and other NIHB inquiries. They are available at:

Regina General Hospital

1400 14th Avenue
(306) 766-4155
Monday to Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

St. Paul's Hospital (Saskatoon)

1702 20th Street West
(306) 655-0518
Monday to Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

First Nations and Métis Relations (Saskatoon)

349 Ellis Hall (RUH)
Saskatoon
(306) 655-6863

Pasqua Hospital (Regina)

4101 Dewdney Avenue
(306) 766-2232
Monday to Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Royal University Hospital (Saskatoon)

103 Hospital Drive
5th floor next to the elevators
(306) 655-0166
Monday to Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

First Nations and Métis Relations (Grey Wolf Lodge)

400 Broad Street
Regina
(306) 766-6995
Please call here for inquiries about traditional medicine

Broadview Hospital

901 Nina Street
(306) 696-5507
(639) 205-7122

For up-to-date information about COVID-19, the following links have been provided.

Government of Canada: The Public Health Agency of Canada

The federal government has the responsibility for the nationwide coordination of the pandemic response, surveillance and international liaison. [More information](#)

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) works with First Nations partners, the Public Health Agency, Health Canada, Public Safety and their provincial and territorial counterparts to protect the health and safety of First Nations. ISC supports First Nations communities in responding to the public health crisis resulting from COVID-19. ISC's regional health emergency management coordinators, communicable disease coordinators, regional medical officers and regional emergency management leads are working with First Nations communities to support public health emergency preparedness and response activities. [More information- ICS](#)

Government of Saskatchewan

The provincial government has the responsibility for the coordination of pandemic planning, including developing contingency plans and mobilizing resources. [More information](#)

Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA)

SHA is responsible for planning the provincial pandemic response, in accordance with provincial and national guidelines. This includes planning health service delivery and working with local partners (e.g., emergency responders, mortuary services) to ensure a coordinated response when a pandemic strikes.

[More information](#) [SHA Facebook Page](#)

Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN)

The FSIN 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 treaties that were made with the First Nations more than a century ago. FSIN also has a health portfolio. [More information](#)

Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S)

MN-S represents Métis citizens in Saskatchewan. The Métis Nation Legislative Assembly (MNLA) is the governing authority of MN-S, made up of the Provincial Métis Council and Métis local presidents. The MNLA has the authority to enact legislation, regulations, rules and resolutions governing the affairs and conduct of the Métis in Saskatchewan. [More information](#)

Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority (NITHA)

NITHA is comprised of Prince Albert Grand Council, Meadow Lake Tribal Council, Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, and Lac La Ronge Indian Band, which all have extensive experience in health service delivery. NITHA is responsible for working with First Nations and Inuit communities to ensure adequate community level pandemic planning, close linkages with the SHA and neighboring authorities, as well as ensuring health services are available and accessible in the event of an emergency. [More information](#)

SHA Key Messages

Visitor Limitations

To protect everyone's safety, at this time visitors are NOT permitted in any SHA hospitals, clinics, or community and continuing care facilities, except for compassionate reasons and maternal considerations. Pregnant women may bring one support person for labour, delivery, and after giving birth. Compassionate reasons may include immediate family during end-of-life care, family of patients prior to a major surgery or visitors aiding in clinical care (at the discretion of the patient's care provider). All patient support people need to be symptom free and follow all COVID-19 safety precautions.

Temporary Facility Closure and Service Reductions

To minimize and contain the spread of COVID-19, several program changes will be implemented. Effective immediately, non-urgent procedures, clinics, surgeries, and appointments will be canceled. As a result, some health care facilities, labs and Primary Health Care clinics will have temporary service disruptions. All urgent care and support will continue for clients but may be delivered through alternate means.

Physician and nurse practitioner appointments will be provided by telephone or other virtual options as determined by individual providers. In-person visits will only be made when deemed necessary by providers. SHA staff will be contacting patients about the cancellation of previously booked non-urgent appointments.

Medical Transportation

People are encouraged to connect with their medical transportation regarding available services. Specific precautions are being put in place, including limiting when transportation will be provided and deeming priority for transport. Medical transportation information can also be accessed at Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) (Call 1-866-885-3933 and select #1 to speak with an employee). FNMH can provide guidance regarding transportation needs to and from the hospital and other NIHB inquiries.

Testing Sites

Check the provincial website for the latest update: [Saskatchewan Testing Sites](#)

Future Preparations

This includes planning for the creation of dedicated spaces to group COVID-19 patients within facilities, designating COVID-19 hospitals in Saskatoon and Regina and elsewhere, where required, and creating additional community-based acute care sites where required (field hospitals in school gyms, community centres, rinks, etc.)

What is COVID-19?

Getting the most accurate information is important to make decisions for yourself and your family. The most up-to-date Saskatchewan information is found on the [Government of Saskatchewan COVID-19 site](#). Here you will find a self-assessment tool, information about COVID-19, testing sites, the number of cases and other pertinent information.

Ways you can stay safe:

- Stay home - if you need to go out stay at least 2 metres (or about six feet) away from people. Be sure to wash or sanitize your hands often, especially when you return home.
- Coughing and sneezing are ways that COVID-19 is passed from one person to another. Cough or sneeze into your elbow or into a tissue. Wash or sanitize your hands after coughing or sneezing.
- Wash your hands often, and always with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer when you do not have access to soap and water.
- COVID-19 is passed from person to person through physical contact with someone. To protect your loved ones, do NOT shake hands or hug. This may be challenging so find other ways to greet and acknowledge each other.

Keep your loved ones safe:

Those with diabetes, heart issues, COPD, and other chronic conditions may have additional complications if they come in contact with COVID-19. Please keep them safe by practicing social distancing, washing your hands or using hand sanitizer.

Practice Social/Physical Distancing:

- Avoid crowded places
- Avoid community gatherings
- Celebrate holiday with immediate family (those you live with in your own house)

New information will be added to this guide as the situation develops.

Please share and print any information as needed.

THE POWER OF PHYSICAL DISTANCING TO SLOW THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

Physical distancing means not gathering in groups with people from outside your home, staying out of crowded places and staying at least 6 feet (2 metres) away from others if you must leave your home.

NO PHYSICAL DISTANCING



1 person



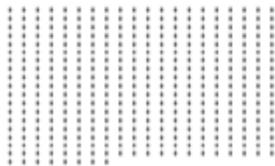
5 DAYS



2.5 people infected



30 DAYS



406 people infected

50% LESS EXPOSURE



1 person



5 DAYS



1.25 people infected



30 DAYS



15 people infected

75% LESS EXPOSURE



1 person



5 DAYS



0.625 people infected



30 DAYS



2.5 people infected

Adapted from RA Signer & G Warshaw, (2020). *The Power of Social Distancing*.

