

For Immediate Release | December 22, 2020

Interior Health administers first COVID-19 vaccines in Kelowna and Kamloops

IH WIDE – Interior Health is celebrating a milestone in the fight against COVID-19, the first vaccinations have occurred in Kelowna and Kamloops.

As part of the provincial COVID-19 immunization program, Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has been received and is being administered to long-term care staff and physicians.

“You have no idea what this means to me,” said Charmane Lazzarotto, first vaccine recipient in Kelowna. “As a health care aide, I care for vulnerable people every day and knowing I can protect them by preventing the spread of COVID-19 is an incredible feeling. I am so happy to be safer, feel safer, and be part of history as we fight COVID-19.”

As vaccine arrives each week, Interior Health looks forward to expanding staff clinics throughout IH.

“In Kamloops we have worked so hard, especially in long-term care, to stop the spread of COVID-19,” said Kelsey Medhurst, first vaccine recipient in Kamloops. “Having this vaccine available will help protect the most vulnerable loved ones in our lives and I encourage everyone to get one.”

Interior Health reminds everyone that vaccine roll-out will be a gradual process and it is very important to stay focused on observing all of the public health guidance that helps prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Everyone in all communities should remain vigilant in following COVID-19 precautions:

- Keep to your household bubbles and avoid social gatherings.
- Stay home when you are sick, and get tested if you have any symptoms consistent with COVID (see below).
- Practice physical distancing and use a mask if you cannot.
- Wash your hands often.

Testing is available for people with new or worsening COVID-19 symptoms. Seek a test immediately if you have one or more of these key symptoms:

- Fever and chills
- Cough
- Loss of sense of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Seek a test if you have **two or more** of the following symptoms for more than 24 hours, and they are not related to any other pre-existing conditions:

- Sore throat
- Loss of appetite
- Extreme fatigue or tiredness
- Headache
- Body aches (muscles and joints aching)
- Nausea or vomiting

- Diarrhea

Booking a test:

Online: You can book an appointment online through the COVID-19 Test Booking Form:

<https://interiorhealthcovid.secureform.ca/index.php>

By phone: Call the COVID-19 Test Booking Line at 1-877-740-7747 for assistance with booking your test.

For information on COVID-19 testing in British Columbia, visit: the BC Centre for Disease Control's [testing information page](#).

For information about vaccine eligibility, distribution and B.C.'s COVID-19 immunization program, visit: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine>

For information about vaccine availability for individuals in care (long-term care, hospitals) and other priority populations, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/vaccines>

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