



Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

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March 8, 2021

Honourable Brian Pallister, Premier of Manitoba
Room 204, Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Re: Continued need to improve communication regarding vaccine distribution in Northern Manitoba

Dear Premier Pallister,

I am writing to bring to your attention the ongoing need to improve communication between the Province of Manitoba and Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Inc. regarding the work being done via the provincial Vaccine Implementation Task Force.

It is my understanding the province had approached the Town of Snow Lake regarding the Community Vaxport Program in Thompson. The Town of Snow Lake publicly issued letters on March 1 and again on March 4, which were approved by your government. Both letters erroneously state the “the Province of Manitoba and MKO” have approached them regarding the Vaxport Program. MKO has done no such thing.

My office reached out to the Town of Snow Lake last week to ask that they retract these letters as MKO has **NOT** approached Snow Lake about vaccine distribution. Our continued focus remains firmly on ensuring First Nations people ages 18 plus from MKO communities receive timely access to COVID-19 vaccines.

First Nations people in Manitoba experience disproportionate impacts of COVID-19, including higher rates of deaths and hospitalization. It is for these reasons MKO advocated to have our health experts be part of Manitoba’s Vaccine Implementation Task Force. We appreciate having a seat at the table, but we expect to be full partners and have a voice in making decisions about the prioritization and methods of distributing vaccines for First Nations people in Northern Manitoba.

I am asking you to ensure your government continue prioritizing access to the COVID-19 vaccines for MKO First Nations citizens. Let’s continue to work together on plans for vaccine distribution and let’s focus on improving communication on the distribution of vaccines for Northern First Nations.

Once again, I invite you to connect with me at any time to collaborate on strategies to address these issues. To arrange a meeting, please contact my Executive Assistant, Dorothy Smith, by phone at 204-918-8101 or by email at dorothy.smith@mkonorth.com.

Sincerely,



Grand Chief Garrison Settee
Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

cc. *MKO First Nations*
Dr. Barry Lavallee, CEO, Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin Inc
Grand Chief Arlen Dumas, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
The Honourable Eileen Clarke, Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations
Dr. Marcia Anderson, Manitoba First Nations Pandemic Response Coordination Team
Dr. Joss Reimer, Manitoba's Vaccine Implementation Task Force
Mr. Robert Hedley, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Snow Lake

Encl: Snow Lake letters of March 1 and March 4, 2021

