

COVID-19 Facebook live update: March 3, 2021

>> Pat: Good morning.

I am Pat Living with the Department of Health and social services in your moderator for the COVID-19 update for March 3rd.

We're joined by the Yukon premier, the honourable Sandy Silver in the Yukon's a Chief Medical Officer of health Dr Brendan Hanley.

Once again our sign language interpreter Mary Tiessen is with us and Andre Bourcier from French language services directed will provide French transition.

Following speakers we will go to the full length or questions from reporters.

We will call you by name and you will each have two questions.

Before we began I would like to verify that everyone can hear us?

If any reporters are having problems, please e-mail ecoinfo@gov.yk.ca.

Dr Hanley -- Premier Silver?

>> Thank you, Pat.

And thank you everybody for joining us here.

It is great to be here with Mary, with Dr Hanley and the team here in the traditional territory of the Taa'an Kwächän Council and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation.

I am very pleased to report that we continue to have zero cases, zero active cases of COVID-19 in the territory.

This is comforting news and again I want to thank all Yukoners for continuing to dig all of the necessary precautions to keep each and every one of us safe.

Practising the Safe Six in also masking up is still an incredibly important part of the equation as we deal with this pandemic.

Last week we received a large shipment of vaccine doses.

The general clinic opened up in Whitehorse on Monday for all residents aged 18 years of age and up.

They have also provided the second shots to those who are over 60 years of age.

It is absolutely wonderful to see the clinic opened and I want to thank all of the nurses, the staff that are working there, and thank the residents of Whitehorse for their patience.

By all accounts, the clinic is operating smoothly and effectively.

The mobile teams are continuing to travel back to the communities to provide a second shot.

They are in Dorset -- Dawson City and Carcross today and will be in Pella Crossing on Friday.

And will continue returning to other communities next week including Carmax, borough wash Landon, and destruction Bay, Pharaoh, Haynes Junction, and Ross River.

If you live in a community and did not get the shot the first time

around, you still can get your first shot when the mobile clinics come through and I strongly encourage you to do so.

We have enough doses for everyone who wants a shot.

Contact Yukon.ca's local this is our shot to book an appointment.

At the end of Monday, 11,503 Yukoners received their first shot and 5,665 have received their second shot.

The clinic in Whitehorse has been immunizing more than 850 people each day in on Monday alone, we delivered more than 1,000 shots.

So we anticipate that these numbers are going to steadily increase in the coming weeks.

The vaccine rollout is well underway, and the uptake has been fantastic so far.

Thank you to all Yukoners who have received their shots and spoken on social media as to the importance of why they are getting their shot.

And I encourage all Yukoners yet who haven't, please get your shot.

The vaccine will keep our territory safe and healthy as we look forward towards spring, and our goal is to immunize as many adult -- adult Yukoners as possible.

Yukon has been able to roll out the vaccine to citizens at a greater per capita rate than most other Canadian jurisdictions.

While others are just beginning to vaccinate seniors this week, Yukon is many months ahead and have already begun to administer doses to the general population over the age of 18.

As Dr Hanley has said, the vaccine is our pathway out of this pandemic.

But it will take time.

There are still many unknowns on our path forward including variants.

It is very important that we continue to minimize the risk of importation and transmission of COVID-19 in the territory.

The controls at our borders and the requirements for individuals to self isolate for 14 days upon entry into the territory are authorized under the state of emergency.

As of today, we have extended the state of emergency for those reasons.

This is not an indication of any increased level of risk in the territory.

Extending the state of emergency allows us to continue to enforce border controls and self isolation requirements to protect Yukoners.

In the past week, four new charges have been laid under the civil emergency measures act including two for failure to issue a declaration when entering the territory, one for failure to self isolate as required, and one for failure to wear a mask.

We will continue to enforce these measures as necessary to keep all Yukoners safe and healthy.

A state of emergency can also be lifted at any time if it is no longer required.

We continue to monitor the situation and to adapt as necessary.

As long as the pandemic continues to pose significant risk to our health and safety and the livelihood of Yukoners, we will take action to protect and support them.

We will continue to follow the recommendations of Dr Hanley and his team as vaccine rollout continues to ramp up, and please continue to support one another.

Be kind and patient.

Keep up the good work everyone.

I do want to do a very quick shout out to my new friend Clem Campbell, who gave me this pen.

Clemence from Prince Edward Island and is raising money for the cancer society, and he wanted to remind everyone that even though you're wearing a mask you still should be smiling.

Thank you, I appreciate the pin.

Thank you to premier Dennis King for involving me in that.

To you.

>> Pat: Thank you, Premier Silver.

Dr Hanley?

>> Thank you.

Good morning.

[Speaking French]

>> As the premier said, I am also pleased to report that Yukon remains steady with no active current cases in the territory -- current active cases.

I too am grateful for Yukoners continuing to be so vigilant with the Safe Six plus one.

I know we are all becoming tired, and sometimes may be dismissive of the public health measures in place.

But let me assure you that by following these measures, we have been able to maintain the low number of cases throughout the past few weeks and our efforts continue to pay off.

Though in general, we have seen lowercase counts in Canada during the past few weeks, we have also seen jurisdictions across the country hit hard recently.

Our friends in PEI are currently under a three day lockdown.

Québec maintains their curfew.

Ontario continues to enforce stay-at-home orders.

Yukon has been able to avoid taking these stricter measures because all of you continue to comply and take a cautious approach when you need to.

Our collective efforts and vigilance help reduce our risk, but it is also by looking after each other that we will see ourselves through these uncertain times.

I know how many feel.

You're exhausted, you may be doubtful in are unsure of what our next few months will look like.

But if for a little while longer we can muster the energy to follow the Safe Six plus one, receive our vaccines, take all necessary precautions, we continue to move closer to closing the door on COVID.

But closing the door on variants is a tougher challenge and a new one for us.

The threat is real.

And when we look around the country and there are signals that things could get worse due to variant transmission, particularly the B117 variety.

BC yesterday for example reported an increase in cases and an increase in hospitalizations.

Rising variants of both the B117 in the B-1 351 art reported.

Some of these variants do not have a known travel connection.

If cases and particularly variants will lead to increased COVID activity, our risk of importing variants will go up day by day.

So while we face this risk, we can also profit from the opportunity to get our vaccinations before they find their way to our territory.

For now, we are in a good place.

No active cases and the vaccine clinics are going full tilt.

The Moderna and other COVID-19 vaccines continue to demonstrate success and offer a strong layer of protection against the original COVID-19 virus.

And modern appears effective against the current variants.

We continue on our path toward vaccinating all eligible Yukoners, and as the premier said, as of yesterday, over 11,500 people with first doses, over 5600 people with second doses in Yukon.

This is extremely promising but we still have a distance to go while we administer the second doses along with new first doses.

Team Togo and Balto are continuing -- returning to Carcross, Dawson City...

This week and team Fox remains focused on Whitehorse.

This week, we have officially begun to vaccinate the general population of Yukon.

On Monday, the first day, the convention Centre clinic was pulled -- filled with excited faces ready to receive their first dose.

The turnout thus far has been impressive and I hope this will inspire others to book an appointment over the coming weeks.

More than 850 people were immunized in the mass clinic yesterday.

Appointment slots for the upcoming weeks remain open for those who were not able to book a time this weekend we will continue to work to safely administer vaccines into arms as quickly as possible.

As I mentioned last week, I will be lining up to receive my shot later this afternoon alongside my colleague and friend, Doctor Elliott.

I personally feel very lucky to receive my vaccine today.

How incredible to think that we are here, a year after COVID-19 was declared a pandemic.

I know many of us have been talking with family and friends outside of Yukon who are amazed at the access to vaccine that we currently have.

We know that there are very good reasons that the territories received a higher allocation of vaccines.

We live in remote areas with limited access to specialized care.

There is a legitimate concern about the risk of worse outcomes from COVID in indigenous communities.

So while we recognize that immunizing the territories is the right thing to do for Canada, this incredible opportunity should provide us with extra motivation to step up and get the vaccine.

As we continue to progress with our journey to vaccinate Yukoners, we are looking ahead to a point where we can safely travel, gather, and recover from this whirlwind of a pandemic.

I think we all now realize that getting there is not quite as simple as we had once thought.

But we cannot get there without vaccine.

Adhering to self isolation when required, getting tested when symptoms occur, staying home and away from others when sick, and of course getting immunized when the vaccine is available will put Yukon in an even better place as we move towards spring.

Looking back to last year, once spring arrived and people were

able to get outside we were able to gradually reduce restrictions that had been in place to protect us all.

Once we achieve the goal of vaccinating the majority of Yukoners, there will be some flexibility with the current public health measures in place.

What is that magic number, that majority?

Hallway know now is the more, the better.

Our goal is 75 percent of the adult population and the closer we get to that number or beyond, the more confident we can be on our ability to safely ease up on restrictions.

Easing up means the ability to expand our social bubbles in social gatherings.

We will be able to connect more fully with family and friends once again and increase our gathering sizes when it is safe to do so.

As we approach summer, we hope we will be in a place where we can gather with larger groups at outdoor events, called picnics and camping trips, while celebrating our community, the arts, supporting local businesses, and meeting each other at festivals and markets.

This also may include reducing current restrictions cooked -- so we can expand important ceremonies such as Potlatch's, funerals, celebrations of life and weddings, while keeping them safe.

As we progress over the next few months we will continue to monitor COVID activity while holding frequent conversations with our provincial and territorial partners to discuss our next steps.

Once we can be confident that COVID risk is diminished and vaccine rates are sufficient, we can begin to open the doors to more travel throughout Canada and eventually beyond.

Eventually also welcoming loved ones with open arms, reconnecting in person instead of by video or telephone.

These changes are not for next week or even next months.

Even setting a date is difficult at this point, but these times are within reach.

We will see a difference over time.

We will be able to reintroduce certain things to our lives we have been missing throughout the past year.

Every day, we are one step closer to reaching post pandemic life.

So let's continue to push through these difficult times.

We are close to being where we need to be.

Please be patient, be kind, and hang in there.

That is all for my update.

Thank you.

Remember to take care of each other and stay well.

[Speaking Indigenous Language]

>> Pat: Thank you.

We will move now to the phone lines in we will begin with John, CKRW.

>> Reporter: Hi.

My question is for Premier Silver in regards to the upcoming territorial election.

I know that you have just read announced that the state of emergency is going to remain in place for another period of time.

I am curious what that means for the upcoming election, will you be calling it during a time when majority of the territory has been vaccinated or some of the health restrictions have been moved back?

Or what is the plan?

>> I am not here to talk about an election.

I'm here to talk about keeping Yukoners safe from COVID today.

>> Pat: Next question?

[Inaudible]

>> Pat: John, do you have another question?

[Inaudible]

>> Pat: Hearing nothing, I am going to move down to Steve from CBC.

>> Reporter: Hi.

Yes, my question is I guess for Dr Hanley.

Last week, there was no clear indication from you about the vaccination rates in the communities.

I was wondering if you could clarify the rights of acceptance of the vaccine among people in the communities.

I know you think it has been going well but that is not very specific.

I was hoping we could have some numbers, please.

>> I don't have numbers for you specific to communities.

That is still an ongoing conversation.

And I think I referred to the sensitivity around revealing specific community numbers as well as-- you know, there are many ways to report numbers and to establish what the denominator is.

That is still a work in progress on both confirming numbers but also confirming with communities.

I think that the release of community data will be up to the specific communities, and what I said-- I don't have an updated number from that overall average from the communities, that we said for that first sweep through the communities which was 53 percent.

What we are seeing with a second round is lots of people coming forward for the first round.

Clearly we are going to get substantially higher than that 53 percent uptick.

I am really looking forward to getting those numbers myself, in once we have done the second sweep of the communities we will have that community-- at least that community specific number, potentially some regional numbers to share as well.

>> Pat: Next question?

>> Reporter: Okay.

I still don't really understand the sensitivity of numbers of how many people got shots, any privacy issues with that.

But...

It just seems kinda inefficient when the numbers are released.

But for my second question, I see there is a no photo and video policy for the vaccine clinic at Whitehorse.

Can you explain why that is and if it is any different in the communities?

Politicians, alluding ones we work with directly, posting photos from inside the clinics at the communities of themselves and others also appearing to be waiting for a shot.

Are there exceptions for politicians or are there different rules in the communities versus the city clinically in also if you're going to say because of privacy, can you explain how much privacy one can expect in a room of about 100 people or so who can all see each other quite easily, please?

>> So as far as individual Yukoners taking photos, that is one thing.

I believe that the guidelines that Doctor Hanley provides to us through his recommendations whether for vaccine clinics or for hotels and restaurants are based upon keeping people safe.

I am very happy to see people in my community of Dawson, when they get their shot, taking photos and explaining to people why it is so important to get vaccinated.

But I couldn't understand why the doctor in his team would recommend, as far as extra access to people, media and others, in these clinics when we are trying to get thousands of people vaccinated per week would be a concern as far as limiting the sizes of gatherings, limiting the amount of people in those clinics.

The folks that work especially at the Whitehorse clinic work extremely hard, and they are very, very dedicated to the craft and to keeping Yukoners safe.

I believe that would be the discrepancy between not wanting journalists in to go through this.

But I don't know if Dr Hanley has anything more to add to this.

I understand it would be the sheer volume of numbers in the clinics.

>> I don't think I have much to add.

It really is all around, the recognition that they are doing up to 1,000 a day of being processed.

There are-- obviously, the need to respect the COVID safety protocols.

And to keep everyone feeling that they are in a trustful environment.

So I think it is as simple as that.

>> Pat: Premier Silver?

-- Premier Silver?

>> I will just add as well, when you see Minister Frost or myself with elders, other community leaders, taking pictures, our goal is to show folks that this is safe.

Our goal is to showcase leaders in the community leading by example's.

Whether that is our elders, our mayors, our chiefs.

Having conversations with Dr Hanley as well about making sure that we do that in the safest manner possible, I think it is extremely important that we do have that social media presence and that we are showing that it is extremely important to us as leaders as well to roll up our sleeve in to work as a team.

I think that is the big thing.

Yukoners have shown us throughout this whole vaccination process, throughout the whole COVID-19 pandemic that we are team workers.

And we are willing to fight this virus at every turn.

Yukoners obviously are not strangers to being team workers are being fighters.

Just look at Dylan Cozens last night.

>> Pat: Thank you, premier.

Now to Tim, Whitehorse Star.

>> Reporter: Hello, thank you.

My first question is for either the premier or Dr Hanley.

I realize you say you don't have the numbers of vaccine uptake, but you have said that the uptake is really good.

What, 800 something people here in the Whitehorse clinic on Monday?

Do you think there is any danger of overselling the vaccine?

It seems like people are more than willing to take it up but you're flogging it like a dead horse.

Are you trying too hard?

>> Interesting question.

We will continue to promote the efficacy and safety of the vaccine, and this really interesting information coming forward about AstraZeneca.

We are seeing chief medical officers of health working extremely hard right across the nation to provide the most efficient schedule of vaccines right across Canada.

I know people are sick of talking about COVID-19 but we definitely believe it is extremely important to get the most up-to-date information out there and it is an ever-changing world.

I just talked with Dr Hanley yesterday about vaccine schedules across Canada and the information that we had a month ago compared to the information we have today.

I don't feel like we are flogging a dead horse.

It's our job to promote the most up-to-date information about vaccine schedules, efficacy, and the scheduled appointments but also, it is really important that Yukoners keep on promoting the

reasons why they are rolling up their sleeve and getting this vaccine.

We have information about COVID passports, vaccine passports.

Our goal is to not have to get there.

Our goal is to make sure that enough Yukoners get the vaccine so that we don't have to have those conversations.

Right across Canada, every Premier and chief medical officer is doing the same.

We really need people to get that vaccine.

Maybe there are people out there that normally skip every second year for a flu vaccine.

Those types of things.

Come up with reasons like I never get sick.

I am having those conversations with Yukoners right across the territory.

Most people understand how important this vaccine is in most people are doing their due diligence to get their up-to-date information on these vaccine options.

And we will continue to promote that.

I don't think it is flogging a dead horse.

I think it is us doing our job to make sure we keep Yukoners safe.

>> A couple things.

I agree with what the premier side, and I think just as we tried to anticipate where the risks are going to be tomorrow and next week and next month in terms of our COVID response, I think we also need to keep ahead of the vaccine information and stay on top of it and keep ahead of it, and be able to talk about what we know.

Went -- I get questions about vaccine every day, and I know that there are people who are hesitating.

We know that we have had success stories with people holding back the first time and coming around four community visits for example.

But vaccine hesitancy is a reality and the more we get to understand and know about it, the more we can address the questions people have and give them the information they need.

I think the worst thing we could do is sit back and let people kind of flood and because eventually, that flood will stop in we will be left with people who have questions.

The more we can address, anticipate, and stay on top of those questions, the more comfortable people will feel coming forward with vaccine.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Another question, Tim?

>> Reporter: This one is probably more for Dr Hanley, especially concerning some of what he just said.

I am not quite sure that I or other people understand why it is so difficult a framework.

For instance we had had cut weeks of not having the case here then we had a couple.

Like into but a framework in place that says okay, after four weeks of not having any active cases, we can do this to loosen some of the restrictions.

Or after two months...

Why is it so difficult to not be nebulous about what is going on?

I am going to --

>> I'm going to take up outward nebulous because we are in a nebulous time, and even this morning, Dr Tam was talking about rising cases in Canada.

So for the first time in a while, verbalizing what we are seeing.

And if we look closely at some of the seven day rolling averages and jurisdictions, we are starting to see an uptick.

And we are seeing very ands increasing.

This is really, this is not a theoretical phenomenon.

What we are seeing right now is what the public health agency modelling in February was predicting.

With the current measures stating as they are last month with the rise of variants and the doubling time, we would start to see increases in COVID activity.

This is a huge consideration for us because regardless of whether we have zero or ten cases right now, we are always managing risk in we are at risk of importation.

That risk of importation has gone up.

With COVID activity in Canada.

Has declined somewhat, but is in danger of coming up again if we see a rise in COVID activity as a result of the rise of variants.

I am very concerned about what is happening in the US with some of the states that are opening up a widely and setting a kind of precedent for opening up in the face of what is burbling underneath, which is the rise of variants.

This is a real risk.

Our strategy has always been risk-based and we are assessing those risks while we think forward, if we get to a point where we are confident the variants are under control in COVID activity is under control, then we have lots on the table that is in the planning.

Also depending again on the vaccine uptake.

That is why we are flogging vaccine uptake.

It is so critical to get into a place where we can be much more confident about being able than to propose a solid framework for opening up.

>> Pat: Premier Silver?

>> I think the best analogy for here is it was only a few short weeks ago that we would say things here at the table like, we are not out of the woods yet.

Weekends the Allied at the end of the tunnel.

Now we are in a situation where we see the finish line.

But really it is the variants, especially the South American, the Brazilian variant that we are still monitoring right now to see the effects of these vaccines and boosters.

Those -- there are variables we can control and variables we can't control.

That is a very important piece, understanding the variants.

I am cautiously optimistic from what I hear from Dr Hanley and the team, but really we are not going to speculate at this point.

We will have more language very, very soon.

If not today or tomorrow, on where we are on the path forward.

More understanding about what we can do and what we can expect with best science to date.

And hearing great things of other jurisdictions in Canada.

It was only a couple of-- a week or ten days ago where there was still speculation as to vaccines rolling out over the next few years.

Now we are back on that schedule again and I think we have always been on that.

So that Canada wide, September is the date where we are really starting to see, at least by September are the rest of Canada, vaccinations.

I wish we could come out here and say that the variants are not a concern for Yukon because of that s-lowercase-letter but that is just not where we are.

We need to get more information on those variants.

We also need to update Yukoners on what we can do once Yukoners get vaccinated.

>> Pat: Thank you.

To Laurie, L'Aurore boréale?

[Speaking French]

>> Pat: To Camille, Canadian press?

>> Reporter: Hi, thank you for taking my questions.

I am still not clear, premier and Dr Hanley, on why you're not releasing the percentage of eligible-- of the eligible population that has had its first in second shot.

Am I right in that, or am I confused?

>> So two weeks ago when we were both here, I was not here last week, Dr Hanley did release the average of rural vaccination.

Our hesitancy to say specific communities, what the meaner the standard deviation is, it really is pitting one community against the other.

People speculate as to why one community got less compared to the other.

I think what we have done is very respectful to the leadership in those communities.

We shared those individual numbers with mayors and council and leaders in the communities, so they have those numbers.

We will continue to share the mean data as well -- as far as uptake because that is important information.

But I don't think pitting one community against another community as to one got 60 percent and the other got 55, been having everybody speculating or pointing fingers, I don't think that is necessarily going to help the safety of Yukoners.

A number as a mean is extremely important.

Knowing full well that we have goals and targets of 75 percent, we have vaccinations available for everybody who wants said and to continue to promote us maximizing that number, and my extreme respect and gratitude goes out to chiefs and councils and mayors and councils who have been helping us in every community to maximize those numbers.

We will leave it to them to do what they need to do to promote everybody who can get that vaccine to get that vaccine.

And we will continue to update the numbers on the averages for rural Yukon.

>> Pat: Dr Hanley?

>> The only other thing I will add to that is I think the most important goal is Yukoners getting vaccinated.

That means people living in Yukon regardless of where we are.

That really is a primary goal and we are all working together on this.

We have communities sharing ideas and thoughts and experiences.

This has been extremely valuable from one community to another.

We have leadership involved, whether that is municipal or first Nations leadership.

This is a collective goal, and we are all in it together.

>> Pat: Think you.

Camille, second question?

>> Reporter: Yeah, I am sorry but I am not-- I am in Vancouver so I am not very familiar with what is really going on, so I want to make sure I understand.

You have released the vaccine update -- uptake figures for the whole territory, have you but you don't want to release them for communities?

Is that correctly.

>> So to date, we have total vaccinations of 17,168 which is-- 11,503-- the total was 17,168.

That is first in second doses.

First doses is 11,503.

Second doses to date are 5,665.

We have also released numbers for rural communities as far as uptake of their adult population that have received the vaccination.

What we have not done is breaking that data down to specific communities.

We will continue to give the numbers in averages and we will respect individual communities to either release their specific community's specific percentage of adult population vaccinated or not based on their leadership.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Haley, Yukon News?

>> Reporter: Thank you.

I had a question about sort of promotion of the vaccine, particularly through social media.

We have seen some jurisdictions around the world offering selfie stations for people who get the vaccine.

I have noticed Yukon released Instagram stickers that can be used by people using the social media buffer.

Either of you, could you speak a little bit about that decision, asking people to promote their vaccination over social media?

>> Dr Hanley may have more to say than I will.

From the very beginning, we started promoting that source of -- sort of behaviour online, we were seeing it from individuals and communities.

People were showing up and saying look, this is why I am taking my shot.

The answers and responses we were getting were amazing.

Elders talking about, I am getting my vaccine for the next generation, for the youth.

Other people having other reasons.

We're just riffing off of the goodwill and the good nature of Yukoners that are of their promoting.

Have seen folks from Haynes Junction doing updates on our update.

Seeing people from every community sharing the most up-to-date information.

Again, mayors and chiefs on their social media feeds talking about the importance of scheduling in not just showing it.

So anything we can do to help on social media, I am pretty horrible at social media personally but I know the team at health and social services, working with the comms team's that we have have really gotten on promoting what Yukoners are doing anyway in just trying to facilitate that conversation.

Saying yes, please, keep promoting your individual decisions as to why you think we should all be vaccinated.

>> Other than getting Pat Living up your or my 15-year-old daughter, I don't know what I would add.

But I think that is the sentiment.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Haley, another question?

>> Reporter: Thanks, I do not.

I would also like more detailed numbers but my colleagues have already addressed that.

Thank you.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Claudiane, Radio-Canada?

>> Reporter: I will ask my questions but I would like answers in French as well.

I am just thinking this might be of benefit for my colleagues.

First question, you say the second round in the community's is bringing people in for their first shot.

So I am assuming there will be a third round in the communities?

Or is this going to be ongoing vaccination clinics going into the communities so that people, as they decide to get their first shot, can get their second shot?

Is this an ongoing thing?

[Speaking French]

>> I will just repeat that in English.

So we are welcoming people, and this is really important, but welcoming people to come for first doses on the second dose visits, the community visits.

Those people will either be accommodated on a third visit or there will be plants specific to that community and it really depends on the number of people and it depends on the size and the capacity of the community and the nursing staff and public health presence in that community.

For instance, it might be as simple as sending a vial of modern or two.

And having the immunizing staff immunized because every community does have staff who are able to immunize.

But in some cases, if the number is substantial, it might make more sense for a short, focused visit by a mobile team in the future.

Those are the kind of arrangements we are working on and you asked, if there is a third visit and people are still coming for the first dose, we will make sure that we have ways and means to accommodate those people for their second dose as well.

Everyone who gets a first dose, we will make sure that they get access to a second dose.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Another question?

>> Reporter: So we have been kind of the following numbers, and the numbers I have been provided was that the 75 percent of Yukoners vaccinated equaled 25,200 people.

That is the goal, and I just want to confirm if this is still correct.

So we are now at 11,500 or so, so we are roughly approaching 50 percent.

I just want to confirm that for all of Yukon the uptake so far, I mean this is first dose in we know that we need the second dose.

And want to confirm that once we hit the 75 percent, you say you're hoping not to have any COVID vaccination, sort of, certificate to be able to travel around.

And I am guessing there is some discussion happening with the other counterparts in the country as to when movement will be possible between provinces, or when we can go back to basically normal?

Just want to confirm again that will happen, if things stay the same right now-- I realize, about that would happen that the 75 percent mark, right?

So when 25,200 Yukoners get their two shots in are immunized, we could see some normalcy coming back?

Is it is correct?

>> I will just do a few clarifications then I will let the good doctor get into specifics.

75 percent was the number that was used Canada wide at that time to basically say that this is what herd immunity would probably look like.

So we always use that number.

The federal government did commit that you know, if we got past 75 percent, there will be a vaccines available for Yukoners even past that threshold.

But that was kind of the line drawn in the sand from an epidemiological perspective in the early days and 'S continued to be looked at and Dr Hanley and I have talked a lot about whether that holds.

So again, just to clarify, we will have enough vaccines for anybody who once it over the age of 18 and we are seeing some great things from AstraZeneca.

If we hit that threshold and we can continue to vaccinate, please continue to show up.

Really right now, and this is a really good question because it is clarifying all the information you have been paying attention to for the last year,, right now the big unknown is the variants.

As we continue to control the variables we can control which is to

try our best to get people vaccinated and maximize the amount and work with the federal government to make sure we have that distribution schedule ironed out and ironclad,, we still need a few weeks to figure the variance in to figure out whether or not what we are seeing in Brazil, of our Moderna vaccinations and boosters are able to accommodate those strands.

To me, there are two up kind of parallel conversations going on.

We don't want to talk about a passport necessarily but we do want to see right across Canada as many people getting vaccinated because that is the best thing we can do in the toolbox that we have to increase our ability to get back to normal.

With the particular variant there are many unknown questions right now.

I am cautiously optimistic, and I am not a doctor.

So I am going to continue to rely on the recommendations from our amazing medical team right across the country, and how they partner in share information when it comes to the specific variants.

[Speaking French]

>> Just to repeat that, our goal is for now 75 percent.

If we reach that opportunity, we have more vaccine to offer to every Yukon adult who once vaccine.

And we will eventually know, we expect with increasing and accumulating evidence, what that magic number is four herd immunity and then whether we will get there or not.

>> Pat: Thank you.

We will just circle back just in case.

John from CKRW, are you still with us?

[Inaudible]

>> Pat: Hearing nothing, then we will thank everyone for their time today.

The next COVID-19 update will take place on Wednesday, March 10th, at 11:30 AM.