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**QUOTES ON EXPANSION OF URBAN INDIGENOUS CLINICS**

“Innovative partnerships between Indigenous organizations and our government make it possible to provide critical public health services that are sensitive to the concerns of First Nations, Inuit and Métis families and individuals. We are grateful for these collaborative partnerships and for every individual who is working on the front lines as we fight COVID-19 and protect every Manitoban.”

— Premier Kelvin Goertzen

“Everyone should have the opportunity to be vaccinated and be protected from the virus while receiving services where they feel safe, comfortable and free of all barriers. We have seen the success of Manitoba’s five urban Indigenous clinics, thanks to ongoing collaboration with Indigenous partners in leading this important work and providing culturally safe and supportive sites for vaccination. This investment will help support ongoing work required to continue outreach and immunization efforts. Every vaccine dose given is critical in the fight against this virus.”

— Health and Seniors Care Minister Audrey Gordon

“We are thankful for the leadership, expertise and dedication of all of the people who have made these urban Indigenous clinics such a success. Our commitment to reconciliation means ensuring Indigenous-led organizations are making the decisions about the clinics and mobile outreach, in a way that best meets the needs of their community. Thank you to everyone who has chosen to be immunized at these clinics so far, and for your decision to protect yourself, your families and your community against COVID-19.”

—Indigenous Reconciliation and Northern Relations Minister Alan Lagimodiere

“On behalf of the assembly and the First Nations Pandemic Response Coordination Team, I extend appreciation to the government of Manitoba and the Vaccine Implementation Task Force for further supporting the Urban Indigenous Vaccine Clinics with this funding announcement. The \$2.1 million in provincial funding will also support the Ongomiizwin Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing, help to increase vaccine uptake and ensure that urban and off-reserve First Nations citizens are fully immunized against COVID-19 in culturally safe and barrier-free settings.”

— Grand Chief Arlen Dumas, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

“On behalf of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, I welcome this significant provincial investment that will support and expand the important work of our community partners to increase access to COVID-19 vaccinations and to meet the needs of Indigenous peoples in urban areas in a culturally safe environment. The ongoing outreach efforts of urban Indigenous clinics focusing on increasing vaccination rates in areas with low vaccine uptake is critical to fighting the pandemic. We are pleased with the collaboration to date and commend the hard work of our Indigenous health experts and community partners for their tremendous efforts in protecting our communities.”

—Vice-Chief David Monias, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak

“Getting vaccinated is how every individual can do their part to protect our community and support the healthcare heroes working hard to save lives every day. Every effort to promote and support vaccinations in our city and province is critical and today’s announcement will help further this progress.”

— Mayor Brian Bowman, City of Winnipeg

“This funding strengthens our powerful partnerships to ensure equitable access to vaccinations. Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre has earned the trust and credibility with our urban Indigenous relatives and community members and this extension and enhancement will continue to support us to offer a safe place where our community is valued, respected and cared for.”

— Diane Redsky, executive director, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Inc.

“Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre of Winnipeg in partnership with the Manitoba government are going to expand our current work, which involves vaccinating urban Indigenous peoples including hard to reach vulnerable relatives through our mobile outreach.”

— Della Herrera, executive director, Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre of Winnipeg

“Manitoba Inuit Association (MIA) was pleased to provide three Inuit-led vaccination clinics at our location at 1000 Notre Dame Ave. during the spring of 2021, that honoured Inuit traditional knowledge and inclusivity of our Inuit households. Our clinics were incredibly successful in the number of Inuit who are now fully vaccinated and who had a positive health experience because it was an Inuit approach to health care ‘for Inuit — by Inuit.’ We acknowledge the efforts of the provincial government in entering into a new relationship with MIA during the course of our advocacy in equitable access to vaccine and their off-setting the costs incurred to us through our deployment of vaccine clinics. We look forward to building on this success with the province in the spirit of reconciliation.”

— Janet Kanayok, director, programs and services, Manitoba Inuit Association

“The focus on Indigenous communities needs to continue to combat the pandemic and to provide safe spaces and access to vaccines. We see that working across jurisdictions is the ‘way to go’ to ensure our communities receive health information from trusted sources to make informed decisions. Meeting Indigenous people where they are at — through mobile clinics or in spaces where First Nation culture, language and traditions are the main focus are some of the reasons this kind of work and funding fosters and strengthens partnerships.”

— Dr. Barry Lavallee, chief executive officer, Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin