

# NATION NEWS



**SUPPORTING URBAN MEMBERS  
DURING THE PANDEMIC**

## URBAN SERVICES OFFICE

**DEPARTMENT UPDATE BY JODIE DELORME, PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

Cowessess First Nation Urban Department delivers programs and services on behalf of membership following the Cowessess First Nation Urban Department Policy. The Department advocates and assists members when needed. Our goal is to continue to improve the quality of life for our community and our members; and to help achieve self-sufficiency.

All programming was paused due to COVID-19 back in March 2020, but we continued to think of ways to assist our members in staying safe, healthy & active during the pandemic. This past year we have tried to assist our members in different capacities and due to COVID restrictions it was a trying time.

The Health Department has donated cleaning & activity supplies to our Elders and members residing in Regina. Throughout the pandemic they have been providing us with gloves, masks and hand sanitizer to hand out to our members.

In partnership with Whitebear First Nation we received funding from Indigenous Services Canada to create care packages for our Urban Members residing in Saskatchewan. Distribution of care packages went out to 525 of our members and 225 going to Whitebear members.



Sandwiches to the streets was a great opportunity for us to assist those in need. Due to the pandemic this program was cancelled but we did receive a donation from Loblaw's for our members.

FSIN provided care packages to our members in need; a total of 207 have been distributed with another 100 being delivered this month. Our members have been so grateful for all that has been provided to them during this time.

**Christmas Dinners 2020:** Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions we were unable to host our annual Christmas Dinners that are held in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Cowessess, Regina, Yorkton and Winnipeg.

Our youth received a \$50.00 Walmart gift card providing they are registered with the Nation. In order to receive the gift cards parents/guardians had to pre-register by the end of November.

**Women's Group:** In Partnership with Chief Red Bear Children's Lodge and the Health Department; activities were administered once a week via Zoom. It started back in October 2020 and went until March 2021. Plans are in the works to start again hopefully by June.

**Seniors Health Kick Program:** For the month of April each week our Seniors/Knowledge Keepers received a



grocery checklist for a staple of dairy, fruit, bread and vegetables.

This pandemic has been extremely hard on our Seniors/Knowledge Keepers and with this program it provides them with staying healthy and for emotional support during this time.

**Tuesday Hot Suppers:** In partnership with Māmawēyatitān Centre we are providing a hot meal from 6:00pm-8:00pm to not only our members but to others in the community who are in need. This has been an amazing initiative and being able to feed as many people as we can has been a blessing. In total we have given out over 780 hot meals.

Thank you to all the volunteers that assisted with preparing, packaging and delivering the hot meals.

Currently, we are hoping to expand our programming and acquire more funding.

**FOR INFORMATION REGARDING  
COVID VACCINES IN SASKATCHEWAN  
PLEASE CALL  
1-833-SASKVAX (1-833-727-5829)**



# COVID VACCINE: INTERVIEW: DEANA LERAT

## Q: When did you get your vaccine?

A: I heard the vaccine was in and seniors would have priority to receiving the vaccine. I had an appointment in Yorkton and it was well organized and very quick. And that was the first day of the vaccine.

## Q: Did you have fears, second thoughts or concerns?

A: Definitely not. I've been fortunate to read about it and be involved in the vaccine of the H1N1 Pandemic plan in 2009 and I'm quite aware that the vaccine is the only thing that's going to help us.

## Q: Do you remember the H1N1, Now you don't even hear about it.

A: It's going to be a while because the virus is in the air. Today I'll be getting my second shot. We will be protected but we may still pick up the virus and carry it in our nasal passages and pass it on. So we still have to continue with the guidelines of wearing the masks, washing your hands and not going in public to protect others.

## Q: How do you feel after getting the vaccine?

A: Oh I felt fine. I never had any side effects. A little sore arm.

## Q: What would you tell people unsure about getting it?

A: I would tell them to research it some more and decide for themselves. What else is there? That's the only thing that we have right now. It's the only form of protection we have right now. And it's available. People have worked to develop this vaccine. I would say it's a great decision to get it and I feel fortunate that we can get this vaccine [...] Everybody has to do their part.



**"IT'S A GREAT DECISION TO GET IT AND I FEEL FORTUNATE THAT WE CAN GET THIS VACCINE [...] EVERYBODY HAS TO DO THEIR PART"  
- DEANA LERAT**

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