

January 18th Vaccine CoP Video Call

10 am PST / 11 am Mountain and Saskatchewan / 12 pm Central / 1 pm EST / 2 pm Atlantic

Attendance: 34 people in attendance

Indigenous Welcome: Kevin Barlow

Opening: Patrick McDougall, Director of Knowledge Translation and Evaluation

Presenters:

- **Rosalyn Boucha**, Communications Manager, MA Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba
- **Allyssa Shrupka**, Events and Coordination lead, and Project Coordinator for the Immunization Partnership Fund at the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre
- [Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata](#) started in 1984, it is a grassroots initiative in Winnipeg, Manitoba. It is an Indigenous led and community-based organization. It serves as a community place for people to gather and get support. The name translates as “we all work together to help one another”. With over 200 employees and about 16 centres across Winnipeg, they operate about 50 programs at a time. They have an Immunization Partnership Fund (IPF) project, the funds for the project are used to address vaccine hesitancy and support equitable access to the COVID-29 vaccine among indigenous populations.
COVID-19 pandemic has impacted a lot of the programming quite significantly, specifically around their community care sites, they had to close public access to their sites since March 2020. They transitioned into COVID-19 related programmes such as the Emergency Food Kit program. Which is one of their COVID emergency response efforts. They have almost 400 people relying on them for food, they provide weekly food supplies for families, offer mental health support, PPE’s and access to knowledge keepers if requested. They also offer valid information to the people they serve as most of them do not have access to this.
- **Presentation: Protecting our Future Campaign**
Rosalyn and Alyssa provided an overview of the Ma Mawi Centre’s vaccine roll out strategy and IPF funded campaign.

A lot of the programs offered through the Centre do not directly relate to COVID-19 vaccine, but it is believed that access to food and security is the most common need of the people they serve. So, this has been a means to talking to community about the vaccine. Food insecurity has always been around, however the COVID-19 pandemic has magnified this issue.

The Ma Mawi Centre first opened an Indigenous testing site, to ensure they were meeting the needs of Indigenous peoples. The testing sites are family friendly. They have also opened vaccination sites. Once tested, if positive they offer additional support during isolation. They have a partnership with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and run a completely Indigenous led initiative.

As an organization, they provide lunch, access to food hampers, bus tickets, transportation for families or elders or individuals who are anxious to get on the bus due to higher rates of COVID-19 in the community. They have language speakers on site, this is amazing for when elders come in and hear a familiar voice.

They had amazing programs during the summer, an example is the mobile clinic, barbeques, door-to-door outreach, canvassing, social media outreaches, etc. The site has administered 32,665 vaccines between April 2019 and December 31, 2021.

Through the Immunization Partnership Fund, they have launched the project called “Protecting our Future”. This initiative takes a community driven grassroots approach to address vaccine hesitancy within the urban Indigenous community. They are rolling out a direct mail campaign for those in the community who do not have access to information. The direct mail is going to help fill the gap by targeting community members who do not have access to their platforms. The campaign flyers will include basic information about COVID-19, where to get vaccinations and other supports including mental health supports. All services are free. They are also hoping to create a diverse circle of elders and knowledge keepers to act as advocates for COVID-19 vaccines. One of the barriers that has been captured in a survey is that respondents do not see anyone who looks like them advocate for the vaccine. They are hoping that this strategy addresses this barrier. We are hoping to also have easily read information and short videos for members of the community to access.

- **Discussion**

- **What process recommendations do you have for organizations interested in co-creating public health information, particularly with folks disenfranchised from the health care system?**

This is not an easy conversation but it’s getting more popular. We are lucky to have some amazing Indigenous healthcare professionals who sit in meetings with Federal and Provincial health organizations. They have been huge advocates for us and have reached out in support of the community. While waiting for the IPF, there was Protecting our People Manitoba, we have partnered with them and built up on the strengths of their work

- **Based on your experience, can you expand on how to support those who are vaccine hesitant in a culturally responsive way, especially if you are a non-indigenous organization?**

The best way is to meet people where they are and not be judgemental. For Indigenous people, the hesitancy is coming from a place of fear and mistrust. This fear comes from a valid place. The best thing to do is hold space for that and not belittle them.

- **How has the change in rules and guidelines for COVID-19 affected your work, how have you managed to stay adaptable through it?**

It has been hard to build trust around all the inconsistencies. We are working closely with Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, that has helped us stay ahead of things. Especially, having direct contact with the Indigenous health practitioners have helped us to not get caught off-guard. We try to be careful with the language of our information, ensuring that we are not including information that would fluctuate over time.

- **How long did it take you to administer almost 33,000 Vaccines?**

We opened the vaccine clinic on April 29, 2021. We administered vaccines over 8 months. We are opened Monday to Friday and Saturday when we had access to the bus. Within the last 2 months we remained open Monday through Saturday and ran extended hours on Thursday.

•How has your experience been working with those with complex health scenarios like being pregnant or immuno-compromised?

Our consultations and surveys revealed that there was misinformation around those who were pregnant. We have reached out to our Indigenous practitioners to address some of these issues. We are thinking of doing some short videos with the health professionals specifically on the vaccine and pregnancy.

Mini Evaluation: by Katherine and Amanda A mini poll was conducted by our evaluation team to explore the following questions:

1. Is your organization and / or community experiencing COVID-19 fatigue?
2. Do you think that people who took previous COVID-19 vaccines still have trust in the COVID-19 booster shots?
3. If yes, what are some things you have heard with regards to trust in the COVID-19 booster shots?
4. Would it be of benefit to you and/or your organization to continue attending the COVID-19 Vaccine Community of Practice videocalls beyond March 31, 2022?
5. The Dr. Peter Centre distributed 10 low-barrier \$15K microgrants to support organizations with their COVID-19 vaccine strategy. Would your organization be interested in applying for these funds if more microgrants were available?

Closing: Thanks to everyone for joining. Wishing you all a good rest of your day.



Supporting Families

- Grandmother in the Winnipeg family of community service-providers since 1984.
- Over 35 years of experience working with Indigenous families in Winnipeg.
- Community-based programs and services within the philosophy embodied in our name.

Pillars of Service



Community Care

575 Larsen Ave.
363 McGregor Ave.
443 Spence St.

Caring for Our Relatives

Indigenous Care Homes
Youth Care Homes
Youth Housing
Family Reunification



Youth Development

Cultural Programs
Employment Readiness
Healthy Lifestyle
Truth & Reconciliation

Indigenous Knowledge

Gathering & Training
Spirit of Peace
Housing First
Child Development





Emergency Food Kits

Supporting 1,800+ Households
with 3,800+ school age children



Distributed over 230,000 hampers that have included:

- PPE and Cleaning Kits
- Mental Health Supports
- COVID-19 Information
- Vaccine Information

Urban Indigenous COVID Testing Site

- Safe, familiar, and supportive environment supporting families through COVID testing and isolation.
- Isolation planning, food, traditional medicines, activity kits and mental health support.
- Site administered **14,166 Tests** (79% Indigenous) between April 6 and December 31, 2021.



Urban Indigenous Vaccine Initiative

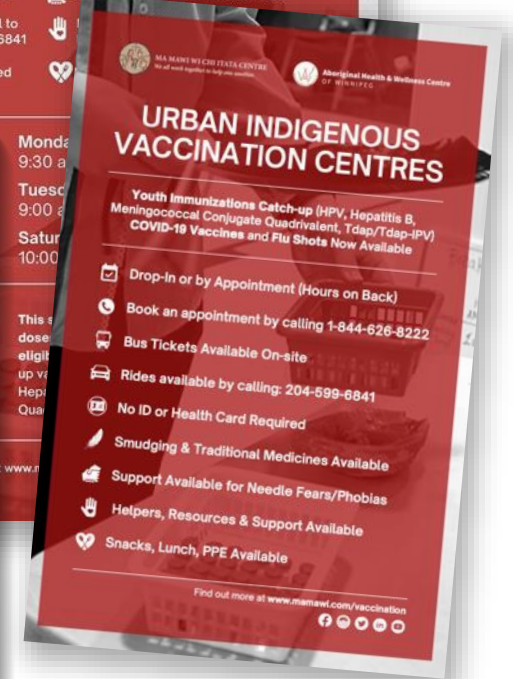
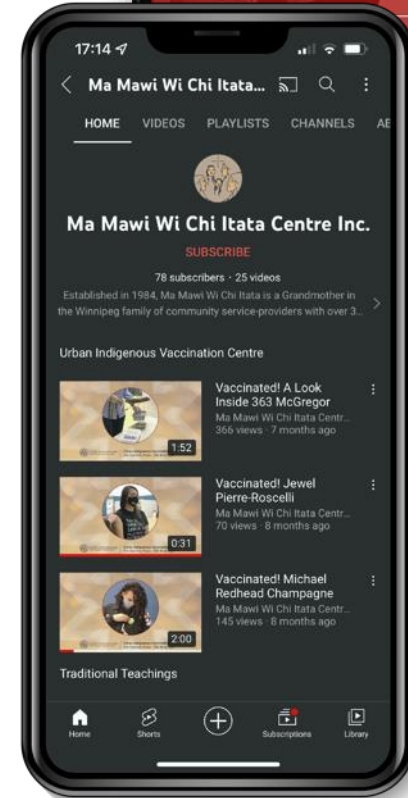
- Safe, familiar, and supportive environment supporting community when accessing their COVID vaccines.
- Food, traditional medicines, activity kits, Indigenous language speakers and check-ins.
- Site administered **32,665** vaccines (62% Indigenous) between April 29 and December 31, 2021.



Protecting Our Future

Immunization Partnership Fund

- Community Driven
- Accessible Digital & Print Communication Strategies
- Building on #POPMB (Protect Our People MB)
- Outreach Support
- Removing Barriers to Accessing the Vaccine



*Miigwech * Ekosani * Masi Cho * Pidamaya Do*

Rosalyn Boucha

Communications Manager

E: rboucha@mamawi.com

Allyssa Shrupka

Communications & Events Coordinator

E: ashrupka@mamawi.com



MA MAWI WI CHI ITATA CENTRE

We all work together to help one another.