



Session #2

# Public Health Update:

*Hepatitis C & ECHO+*

January 24, 2023

13:30 - 15:00



Indigenous Services  
Canada

Services aux  
Autochtones Canada

Canada

# Outline

1. MOH Update: Respiratory viruses in Alberta
  - *Dr. Chris Sarin*
  
2. Hepatitis C & Extension for Community Health Outcomes+
  - *Dr. Samuel Lee*
  - *Kate Dunn*
  
3. MOH Update: The Impact of Hepatitis C in Alberta First Nations
  - *Dr. Chris Sarin*
  
4. Reporting & Treatment: Hepatitis C Practices and Resources
  - Christina Smith, RN
  
5. Questions

# MOH Update: Respiratory Viruses in Alberta

Dr. Chris Sarin

*Senior Medical Officer of Health*

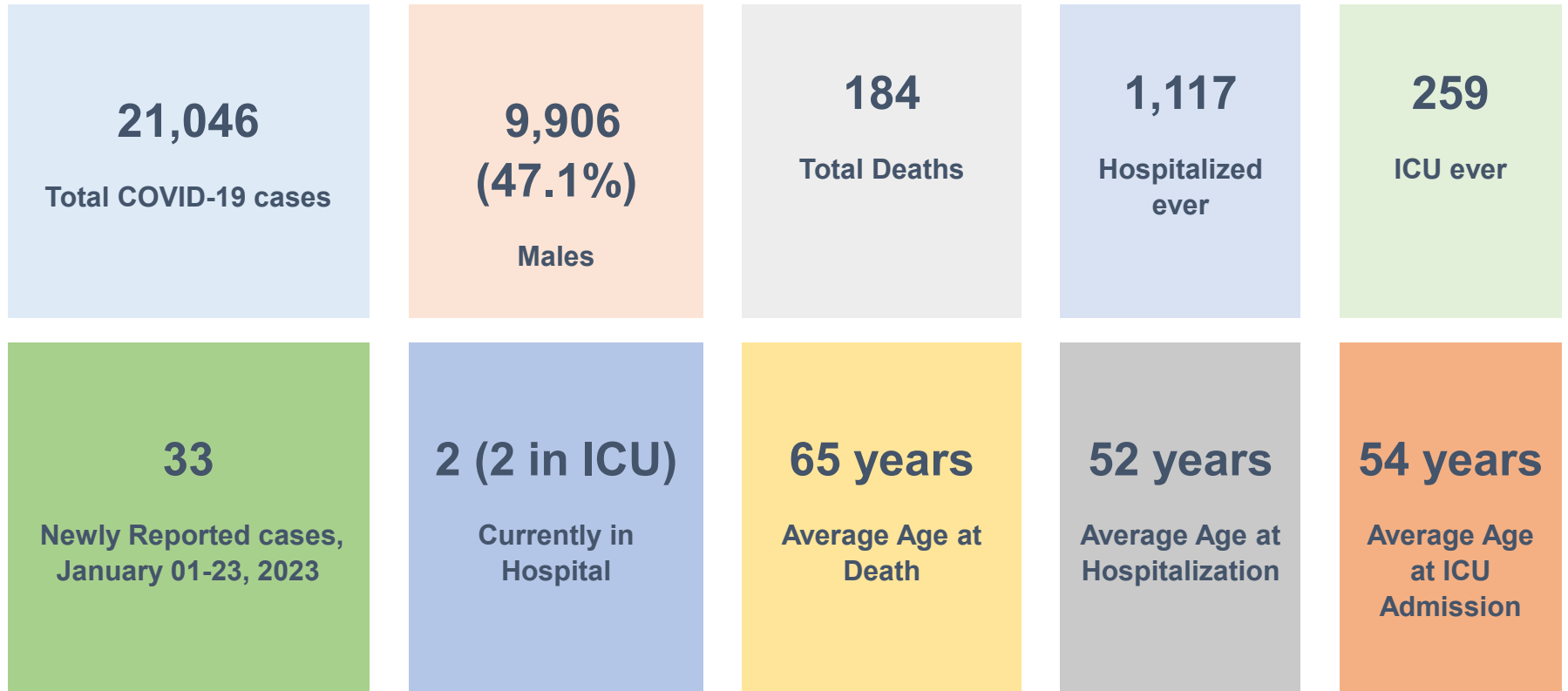


# MOH Update: Respiratory Viruses

- As of early January 2023, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is reporting a decline in influenza activity, with both influenza and RSV returning to seasonal norms at the national level.
- COVID-19 Omicron subvariant XBB.1.5 is reporting to be more transmissible and contagious, however has not been associated with increased severe outcomes.
- A new, more transmissible variant could lead to more cases and higher healthcare usage. Even mild cases can impact daily activities like going to work, school, and socializing.
- Bivalent boosters, available in First Nations across Alberta, continue to provide the best protection against the most severe outcomes of COVID-19.
- Primary respiratory viruses of concern in Alberta:
  - COVID-19
  - Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)
  - Seasonal influenza

# Overview of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases in First Nations Communities on Reserve in Alberta

Source: FNIHB COVID-19 ER System via Synergy in Action (January 24, 2023)

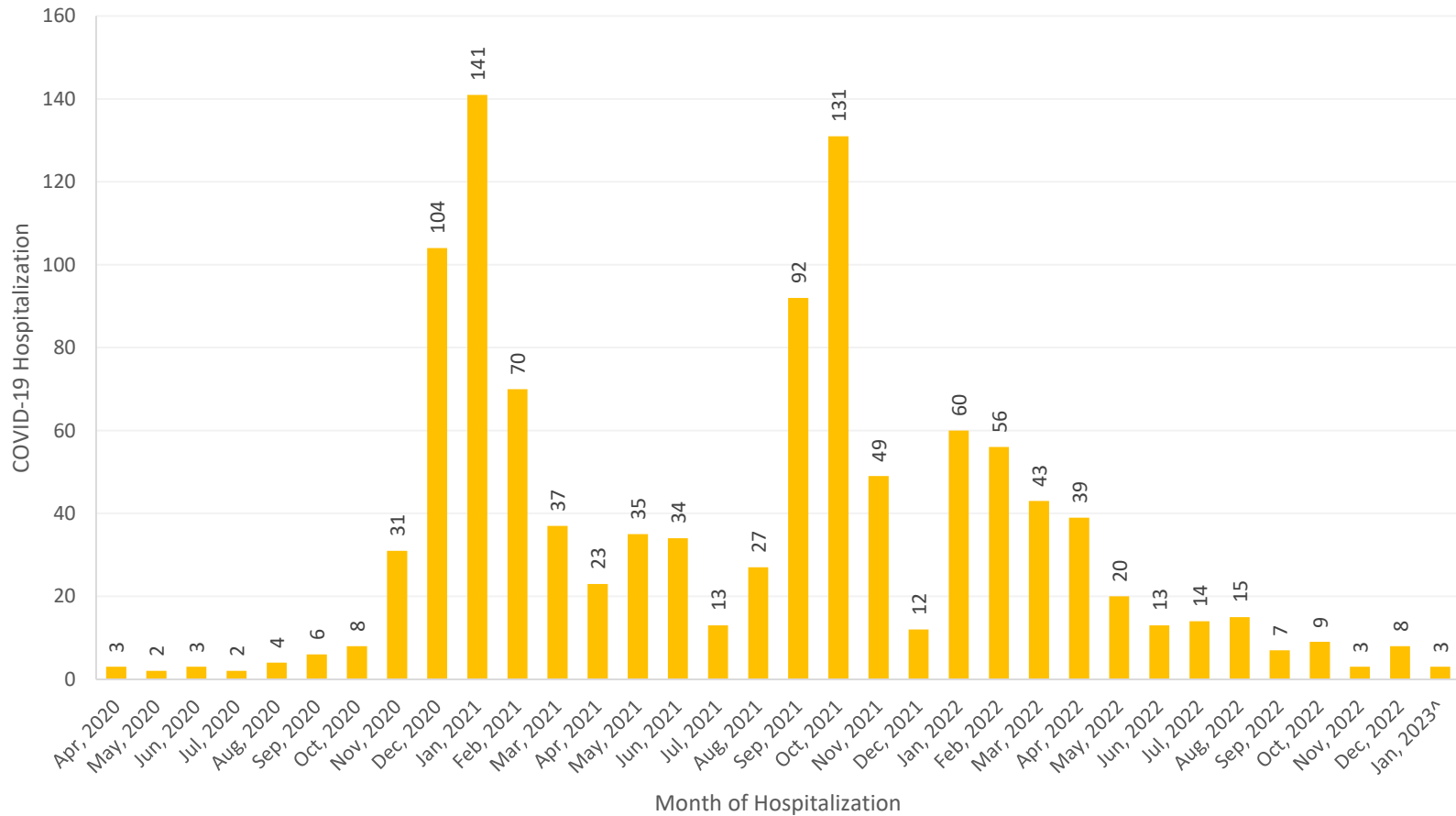


These do not include cases confirmed with only rapid antigen test in communities

# COVID-19 Hospitalizations in First Nations Communities on Reserve by Hospitalization Month, January 23, 2023

Source: FNIHB COVID-19 ER System via Synergy in Action (January 24, 2023)

COVID-19 Hospitalizations in First Nations Communities

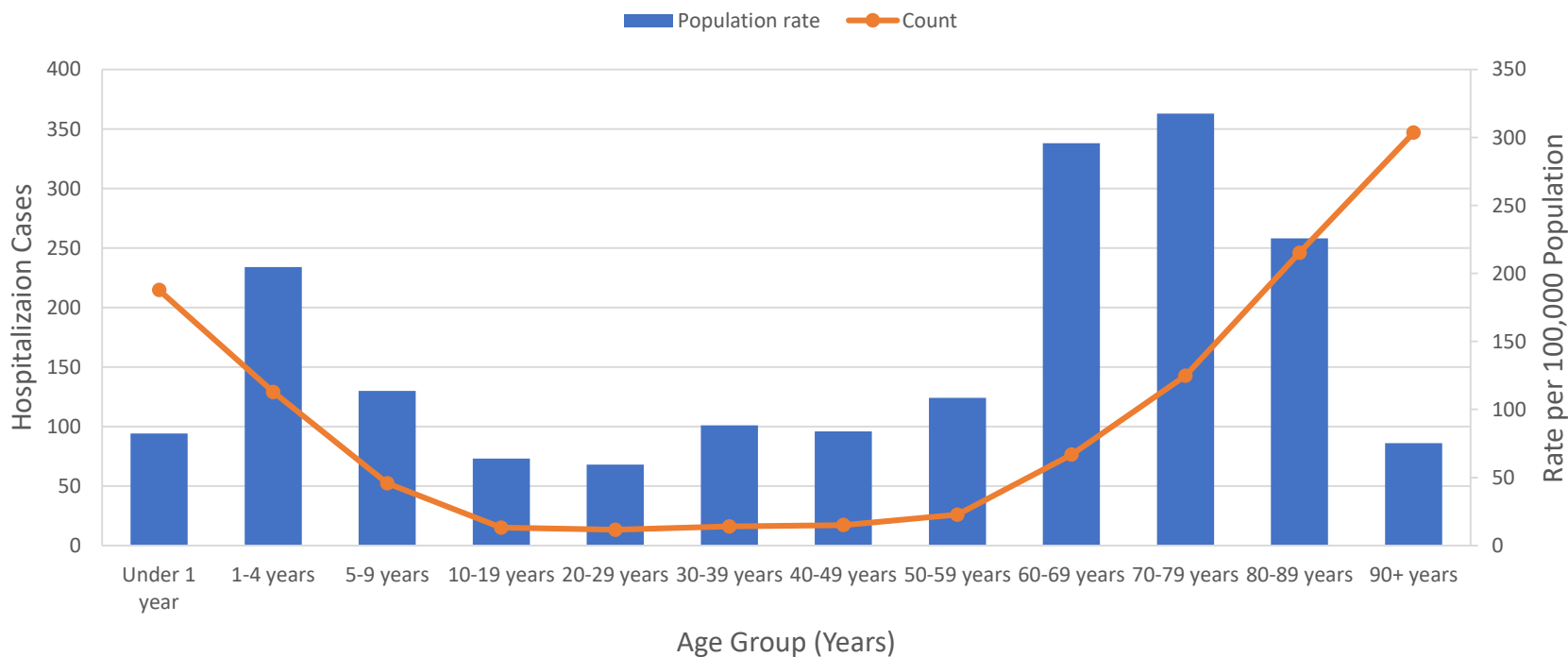


<sup>^</sup>Data may be incomplete

# Influenza in Alberta

- As of January 24, 2023, 45 hospitalizations and 8 death due to influenza have been reported among First Nations people living on-reserve in Alberta

Number and Rate of Hospitalizations among Lab-Confirmed Influenza Cases by Age Group, Alberta, 2022-23



# Hepatitis C & Extension for Community Health Outcomes+ (ECHO+)

Dr. Sam Lee

*Professor and Hepatologist, University of Calgary, Director Project ECHO+ HCV*

Kate Dunn

*Community Engagement ECHO+ Alberta*





# MOH Update: Hepatitis C in Alberta First Nations

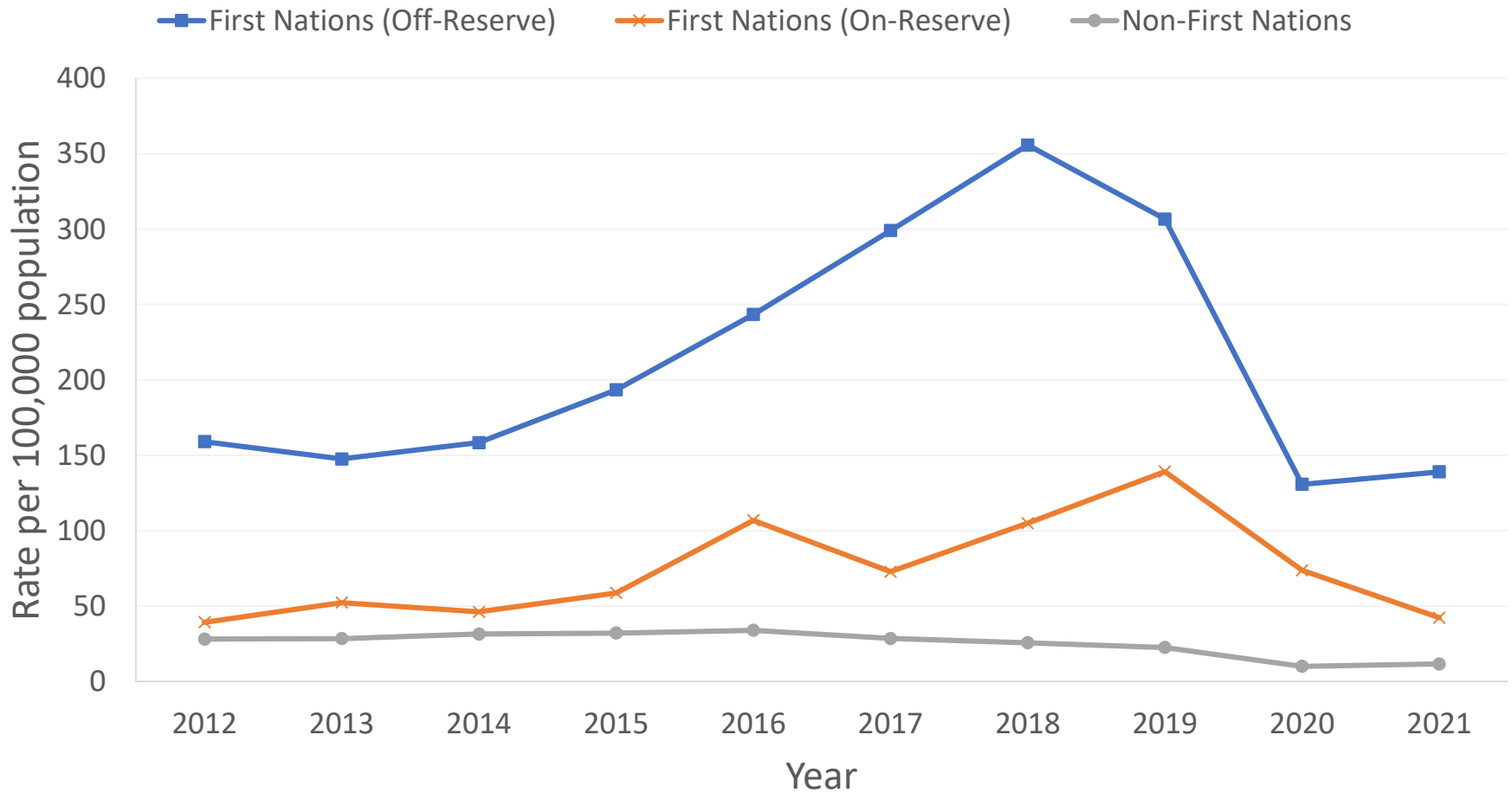
Dr. Chris Sarin

*Senior Medical Officer of Health*



# Rate of New Hepatitis C, by Population Group – Alberta, 2012 - 2021

Data Source: Alberta Health, Analytics and Performance Reporting Branch, Interactive Health Data Application and FNIHB NDR reports



# Hepatitis C & First Nation Populations in Alberta

## **Between 2012 – 2021 (graphic representation on next slide):**

- 2,430 new hepatitis C cases were reported among First Nations people living in Alberta, averaging 243 cases per year.
- 570 new hepatitis C were reported among First Nations people living on-reserves in Alberta, averaging 57 cases per year.
- In 2021, the rate of new hepatitis C among First Nations people living on-reserve was more than three times the rate of non-First Nations people.
- Significant decrease in the number of reported new hepatitis C cases in 2020 and 2021 may be due to decrease in testing activities because of the Covid 19 pandemic. In general, less people sought non-COVID-19 related healthcare services during that period.

## **Hepatitis C During the COVID-19 Pandemic (on reserve)**

- Between 2020 – 2022, 131 new hepatitis C cases were reported among First Nations people living on-reserves:
  - 59 new cases in 2020
  - 35 new cases in 2021
  - 37 new cases in 2022

# Reporting & Treatment: Hepatitis C Practices And Resources

Christina Smith, RN

*Manager, Communicable Disease Control, ISC-AB*



# Hepatitis C Reporting Process

- A lab report is generated that indicates an individual has the hepatitis C virus
- The ordering practitioner receives a copy of the lab result and contacts the client to relay the result
- AHS CDC Team receives the lab report
  - AHS recognizes the individual resides in a First Nations community in Alberta and forwards the lab to FNIHB CDC inbox
  - Note: If the test was ordered under Dr. Sarin, or he was cc'd on it, the CDC inbox would receive a copy of the lab at the same time as AHS
- FNIHB CDC Team reviews Netcare and SHIP to determine if the hepatitis C infection is chronic or acute, and forwards the lab with instructions to the community health nurse

(con't)

## Hepatitis C Reporting Process (con't)

- The community health nurse contacts the client to confirm they have received lab results
- The community health nurse:
  - Completes the *Hepatitis C Data Collection Form* (found on OneHealth)
  - Completes the *Checklist for Hepatitis C Counselling* (found on OneHealth)
  - Completes a *Report of Notifiable Disease (NDR)* (On CHIP)
    - Is sent to the FNIHB CDC inbox
- The community health nurse confirms with the individual that they have been connected to one of the Hepatitis C clinics (or hepatologist) for follow up (list found on OneHealth).
- FNIHB CDC Team reviews the NDR and submits it to Alberta Health
  - Note: Alberta Health notifies the FNIHB CDC Team of any outstanding NDRs

# CDC Contacts for Hepatitis C Lab Reports or NDRs

- Primrose Sotocinal
  - Phone: 780-224-7293
  - Email: [primrose.sotocinal@sac-isc.gc.ca](mailto:primrose.sotocinal@sac-isc.gc.ca)
  
- Nicole Allam
  - Phone: 431-242-0112
  - Email: [nicole.allam@sac-isc.gc.ca](mailto:nicole.allam@sac-isc.gc.ca)

**Questions?**

**[VCHELP@FNTN.CA](mailto:VCHELP@FNTN.CA)**





# Acknowledgements

Dr. Sam Lee, Professor and Hepatologist, University of Calgary, Director  
Project ECHO+ HCV

Kate Dunn, Community Engagement ECHO+ Alberta

Dr. Chris Sarin, Senior Medical Officer of Health – FNIHB

Christina Smith, Registered Nurse - FNIHB

Ibrahim Agyemang, Senior Epidemiologist – FNIHB

TSAG Telehealth Team (Michelle Hoeber, Brooke Bustillo and team)

FNIHB Technical Team