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February 26, 2021

[health.minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:health.minister@gov.ab.ca)

Honourable Tyler Shandro  
Minister of Health  
423 Legislature Building  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Shandro,

I am writing on behalf of the more than 30,000 members of the United Nurses of Alberta (UNA) to urge your government to commit to ensuring that all remaining front-line health care workers be included and prioritized in Alberta's Phase 1 and 2 COVID-19 vaccine roll out.

We recognize that many front line health care workers have already been included in Phase 1 but there are still many that haven't and it is unclear to us when these remaining workers, who are risking their lives to provide direct care in various clinical settings, will be vaccinated and whether this will occur before the general public vaccine roll out begins.

Our request is consistent with the *National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) Guidance on the prioritization of key populations for COVID-19 immunization*, which recommends that **all** front-line health care workers who have direct close contact with patients be included in Stage 1 of a phased vaccine roll out.<sup>1</sup> Vaccination of all front-line health care workers is essential to protecting Alberta's health care capacity and it both recognizes and minimizes the disproportionate burden of risk that front line health care workers have had to carry and face in their jobs on a daily basis. Furthermore, racialized groups and recent immigrants who have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 are over-represented in jobs in the health care setting; therefore, immunization of these workers has the potential to reduce or prevent the exacerbation of health inequities related to COVID-19.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Canada. (2021). Guidance on the prioritization of key populations for COVID-19 immunization. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci/guidance-prioritization-key-populations-covid-19-vaccination.html>

In summary, it's critical that Alberta Health provide greater transparency on when these remaining front-line health care workers will be vaccinated and it is our expectation that these workers will be vaccinated well before the general public roll out begins.

Yours very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Heather Smith, RN  
President, UNA

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