

Emergency Food Response Update

March 16, 2021 @ 9am

Hosted by: Thunder Bay & Area Food Strategy

Present (27 organizations)

- Karen Kerk – TBAFS
- Courtney Strutt – TBAFS
- Rachel Globensky – LU/TBAFS
- Albert Brule – United Way
- Allison Hill – TB Food Bank
- Anita Jean – NorWest CHC
- Brant Warwick – CMHA
- Jay Arjune – CMHA
- Brendan Carlin – RFDA
- Cathy Oleschuk – Salvation Army
- Cynthia Gomez – Mushkiki
- Daniel Hobbs – Red Cross
- Dianne Matson – Redwood Park Church
- Erin Waddington – Feed Ontario
- Erin Beagle – R2H
- Kim McGibbon – R2H
- Farren Tropea – Matawa
- Gwen O’Reilly – NWOWC
- Jamie Evanyk – OAHAS
- Sarah Kaukinen – OAHAS
- Julie Fair – FWFN
- Kathryn Hughes – OKC
- Kaitlin Prezio – YIP
- Kimberly Kennedy – Shelter House
- Linda Bruins – Evergreen
- Lynne Savela – SUCCI
- Marilyn Junnila - Shkoday
- Michael Hull – Shkoday
- Melody Macsemchuk – Grace Place
- Michael Quibell – Dew Drop Inn
- Sheena Campbell – TBIFC
- Shelby Gagnon – IFC
- Steve Adams – JHS

Update Overview

- » Update on March 2nd Arising Needs – Isolation food support
- » Information on community vaccination & COVID testing
- » Updates by Type of Service
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 - Meal + snack services
 - School nutrition
 - First Nation communities
 - Community health organizations
 - Community food supports

Next Meeting is TUESDAY APRIL 6th @ 9:00am

See calendar link for Zoom address.

Update on March 2nd Arising Needs – Isolation food support

- Delivering hampers to those in isolation
 - o The Health Unit, RFDA, R2H, and 211 worked together to find a smooth solution to ensuring that people who are in isolation and need food have their needs met.
 - o People who are in need of isolation hampers can call 211; this information will get shared with RFDA/R2H, with the RFDA currently offering delivery of food hampers.
- Snacks for isolation/overflow shelter and PACE
 - o R2H, OAHAS and a few other organizations were able to provide additional snacks to the needs that arose.

Information on community vaccination & COVID testing

- Urban Indigenous vaccination clinic (ONWA & Dilico)
 - o The Ontario Native Women’s Association (ONWA) in partnership with Dilico Anishnabek Family Care and the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, is initiating an urban Indigenous COVID-19 vaccine clinic in Thunder Bay.
 - o The Mindimooyenh Vaccination Clinic will be a weekly COVID-19 vaccination clinic open to the Thunder Bay urban Indigenous population and their families (over 16 years old (or 18 years old depending on vaccine type).
 - o **Phone**
 - Registration open: Mon to Fri between 10:00AM – 2:00 PM
 - Registration Line Call: 807-697-1753
 - o **Register online**
 - <https://www.onwa.ca/covid-19-resources>
 - o For more information please visit <https://www.onwa.ca/covid-19-resources> or visit www.facebook.com/onwa7
- Mobile vaccination clinic and testing site by NorWest CHC
 - o NorWest has a mobile unit that is currently offering testing twice a week and vaccinations twice a week, currently to Indigenous, vulnerably housed, or homeless populations.
 - Locations and times vary from week to week; for more information contact Anita Jean ajejan@norwestchc.org
- Vaccinations of frontline food support staff
 - o Majority of frontline food organizations have not yet been vaccinated.
 - o A few organizations on the call with frontline staff related to health care have been vaccinated (Matawa, NorWest, OAHAS, and John Howard Society)
 - o A number of organizations have submitted the numbers of doses they would need to vaccinate staff to the Health Unit, but no word yet.
 - o In a meeting with Ivan Ho (TBDHU) late last week, he stated that he is advocating for emergency food services to have their frontline staff vaccinated; this is on the radar of TBDHU, but no concrete word yet.
- COVID Testing
 - o Organizations shared that the only taxi service in town who will pick someone up who has tested positive with COVID is Diamond Taxi; a ride starts at \$100 and goes up from there depending on distance.
 - o Mushkiki also offers rapid testing to their clients.

Updates by Type of Service

Food banks

- RFDA and the public food banks on the call have not seen any changes.
 - o The RFDA has taken on providing and delivering hampers to individuals and families in isolation.
 - o Numbers at the start of March were high.
- SUCCI (Con College) has continued with their regular food bank offerings, with access on par from last year.
- TBIFC is not currently offering their food bank that is open to the public; they do still offer food banks to clients registered in their programs.

Meal & snack services

- Dew Drop Inn is doing well; numbers for Jan/Feb have been higher than last year (3,200 meals served). They have lots of food thanks to RFDA, R2H as well as lots of masks and a strong volunteer pool.
- Shelter House has been able to get some funding reallocated to outsource meal services due to staff demand and capacity at the moment. They are finding their numbers to typically be the same as usual.
- Grace Place is continuing to run the Out of the Cold program and supporting residents who were recently at the isolation shelter. They are offering snacks to the isolation/overflow sites twice a week, as well as sandwiches. They are still not able to operate regular meal services, as they have been short with volunteers and limited staff capacity.
 - o When they are able to open their doors for meal service again, they may be in need of volunteers at that time.
- Salvation Army has their soup van that is out on the north and south side daily, as well as their weekly food bank on Thursday's. They are carrying on with in house programming that connects to cooking and life skills.
 - o Once the spring hits, they are looking forward to getting busy with garden building at their new site.
- Roots to Harvest continues to provide snack and meal support to a number of community organizations they partner with – monthly bags to Elizabeth Fry & TBIFC, weekly bags to Dew Drop Inn, Syrian family hampers once a month, supporting JHS w/ snacks and meals, sandwiches for Wiindo Debwe Mosewin, and providing healthy snacks for north and south side isolation/overflow shelters.

School nutrition

- Red Cross/R2H are continuing on with the online school food bags. Total number of bags has increased to 280 this week (30 going to Gull Bay First Nation & 30 being delivered by the RFDA for those families in isolation) with the bulk of the bags distributed at the regular pick-ups on Thursdays from 3:00 – 4:30pm.
 - o Pick-up locations: Our Lady of Loretto Church (Grenville Ave); Oliver Road Community centre; Evergreen Community Hub (Heron St.); St. Agnes Church (Brown St.); and Limbrick Resource Centre.
 - o See R2H Facebook page for more information.
- Shkoday remains in the touch with the families they work with through the Biwaase'aa program and Aboriginal Head Start and offering food support as needed. Currently providing food hampers for 53 families.

First Nation communities/organizations

- Matawa has replaced their grocery delivery and food voucher system with more of a food bank style (they have a large supply of non-perishables, cleaning products, and PPE). Matawa First Nation members can all if they have tested positive to receive food support.
 - o Also offering a vaccination clinic for members, not able to provide a mobile unit at this time.
- Fort William First Nation's isolation response team has been busy with an increase of positive cases and families needing to isolate in the community. They have been busy providing food and medication kits to people, taking it day by day but currently everything is working out OK.

Community health organizations

- NorWest CHC launched the pilot of the Care Bus, which is going really well! There has been a lot of use of the service as well as donations of food and other needs from across the community. The pilot is only set to run until the end of the month.
 - o They have funding to continue some of the direct food support to clients until the end of the month; when that stops they will be using the brochure put together by this group to direct people where else they can access food.
- Mushkiki has continued to offer weekly food resource boxes with a focus on their clients. The funding for this program currently ends at the end of March, but they have some potential new funding sources they are following up with.
 - o They continue to be a GFB site on monthly basis, where they offer subsidies for their clients.
 - o They are trying to get their community kitchen program back open, which provides ingredients to cook with at home via programming.
 - o They also offer funding for their clients who need to isolate, which can provide food and/or hotels if needed.

Community food supports

- Good Food Box (NOW Women's Centre) is continuing on with GFB, with another 400 – 500 going out this month. They are working with host sites to ensure knock and drop or touchless distribution; they have been relying on support from staff in DSSAB buildings to assist with this in those sites.
 - o They are beginning some regional First Nation community deliveries which will increase their monthly distribution numbers.
- Community Market (R2H, NorWest CHC) continues on, Tuesdays from 1 – 4pm @ Unit 97 Limbrick Place.
 - o NorWest offers greens prescriptions to help subsidize access.

- TBIFC continues to feed people in many different ways, currently through supporting registered clients and those connected to various programs, each of which offer their own forms of distance programming.
- Youth Inclusion Program continues to work with their partners (TBDHU, OKC) to offer weekly food kits for families with pick-ups on Friday's. This is open to anyone who lives in their service neighbourhoods and people need to register in advance (registering will get you signed up for a months worth of drop-offs).
 - o Sites include Academy, Windsor, and Simpson/Ogden.
 - o Deliveries are possible if needed.
 - o Referred clients are connected with youth navigators that can assist with emergency food drop offs.
 - o For more information or to refer people, contact Kaitlin Prezio @ Kaitlin.prezio@thunderbay.ca
- Our Kids Count continues on with their food programming in a virtual manner. Anyone who registers for programs will either get ingredients to cook at home or a cooked meal to participate in life skills programming.
 - o Offering a 2-day supply of food from their food cupboard at their main location on McKenzie street.
 - o Partnering with YIP weekly food kits at Academy & Windsor
 - o Looking forward to the spring and helping participants learn how to start their own gardens at home.
- John Howard Society has a lot of people in their residents isolating right now, so they have had to approach how they support food differently. Have been partnering with R2H for support in this.
- OAHAS has a very small office that is not safe to have people in at the moment, so they continue to work from home, offering supports as needed and partnering with Elevate as a physical contact point.
- CMHA New Foundations program continues to be limited in face-to-face contact with their 300 active members during the grey lockdown.
 - o Once back to red, they are looking forward to having members back into the facility.
 - o In earlier lockdowns, they were delivering 100 – 130 meals twice a week to those individuals on their list. They are not currently doing that, but may look to get that up and running again.