



Corporate Office  
 1092 – 107 Street  
 North Battleford S9A 1Z1  
 Ph: (306) 446-6606  
 Fax: (306) 446-4114

For Immediate Release

June 28, 2011

## News Release

### “Immunization Van Introduced to The Battlefords This Summer”

Prairie North Health Region is piloting a new approach to its childhood immunization program this summer.

PNHR public health nurses in The Battlefords will be out and about in the community through July and August, bringing their immunization clinic into various neighbourhoods. The “clinic” will be held in a special Immunization Van. Parents can bring their children to the Van to receive their required vaccinations against diseases including tetanus, whooping cough (pertussis), measles, mumps, chickenpox, meningitis and others.

“We are bringing our service to our clients,” said Diane Piper, PNHR Manager of Public Health Services. “Our aim is to increase our childhood immunization rates by making our service more accessible and more top-of-mind for parents. They can bring their children who are up to and including six years of age to the Van to get their necessary vaccinations. They will not have to travel to our usual childhood immunization clinics at the Primary Health Centre in North Battleford,” Piper added.

The Van will be clearly identifiable with the Prairie North Health Region logo, Immunization Van signage including the program’s telephone number, and balloons and music to attract attention. The Van and nurses will start in designated neighbourhoods around 10:00 in the morning and move throughout the area, depending on how busy the clinic is in a location, until around 4:00 in the afternoon.

“We won’t stay in one spot if we are not busy. We’ll be like fishermen in a sense – going to where the fish are,” explained Piper. “Weather will likely determine how busy we are sometimes as well,” she added.

The Immunization Van will be in the following neighbourhoods on the following dates:

Thursday	July 7	Winder Crescent	North Battleford
Monday	July 11	St. Laurent Drive	North Battleford
Monday	July 18	Fairview Heights	North Battleford
Wednesday	July 20	200 Block 21 <sup>st</sup> Street (south of Post Office)	Battleford
Monday	July 25	Connaught School	North Battleford
Thursday	July 28 <i>afternoon</i>	Central Park (behind the Library)	North Battleford
Wednesday	August 3	McKittrick School	North Battleford
Thursday	August 4	St. Mary’s School	North Battleford
Monday	August 8	Kinsmen Park	North Battleford
Tuesday	August 9	Riverview	North Battleford

...more

Parents and children are encouraged to watch for the Van in their neighbourhood and access the immunization services. Appointments are not necessary, though people can call ahead or text to 441-1364 to find out where the Van is and arrange for vaccination. More information is also available at the Primary Health Centre office at 446-6400. Parents may bring their children's health cards, and while helpful, it is not absolutely necessary.

"We are trying out the van idea in the summer when the weather is warmer to see how well the initiative works and how well it is received by parents," explained Piper. "If you want the Immunization Van to visit your neighbourhood, you can also text or call us at 441-1364."

Immunization is an essential primary health service that reduces the amount of disease in communities, lowers the severity of illness and the frequency of hospitalization, and decreases health care costs. Prairie North Health Region has one of the lowest immunization rates in the province for two-year-olds. The Region's 2009-2010 rate fell below 65%. To protect the public, the Public Health Agency of Canada recommends 95% immunization coverage for children by age two. PNHR has set targets for improving immunization rates by 2½ per cent per year.

-30-

MEDIA:

For more information, contact:

Linda Lewis  
PNHR Communications Officer  
(306) 446-6625

or

Jennifer Lyons  
PNHR Communications Officer  
(306) 446-6002