



## COVID-19 VIRTUAL FORUM 2021

SHARING LESSONS LEARNED AND SUPPORTING  
A NEW PATH FORWARD

## LE FORUM VIRTUEL SUR LA COVID-19 2021

PARTAGER LES LEÇONS APPRISSES ET SOUTENIR UNE  
NOUVELLE VOIE À SUIVRE

Dear Delegates:

As the Assembly of First Nations' Executive portfolio holder for Health and the co-chair of the AFN COVID-19 National Task Force, I am pleased to welcome you to the *COVID-19 Virtual Forum: Sharing Lessons Learned and Supporting a New Path Forward*, hosted virtually from traditional Algonquin territory. We have been living with the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020 and with it, we have tackled multiple challenges, stretched our resources, and been innovative in our responses to protect our Nations.

The AFN COVID-19 Task Force was established by the AFN Executive Committee to make every effort to ensure that the unique needs of First Nations are addressed during this global pandemic. In December 2020, AFN Resolution 03/2020 was passed mandating the Task Force to continue their work throughout the pandemic. While we continue to advocate to help ensure that First Nations are supplied with the resources they need to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 in their communities, including access to vaccines, we know the fight to protect our communities has been led by First Nations across Turtle Island.

This forum is an opportunity to share some examples of this work and to acknowledge what we have accomplished, while recognizing there is much work to be done as we continue to combat this virus and rebuild and recover. This forum has also been designed to allow space for dialogue and sharing of experiences and discuss ideas through workshops that complement the presentations on the second and third forum days. What we hear from you will continue to inform our advocacy work as we move forward. We hope that what you learn over the three days of this forum will continue to inform your work and reemphasize that we are all in this together.

I want to thank each of you for your participation in this important forum and for the role you have played in mitigating the impacts of COVID-19. I encourage all of us to continue following our local public health guidance and to get vaccinated for the well-being of yourself and your loved ones. I look forward to hearing the great presentations that will take place over the three days of the forum and will continue to co-lead the work of the Task Force to support First Nations through this pandemic.

Sincerely

Marlene Poitras  
Regional Chief, Alberta  
Co-Chair, AFN COVID-19 National Task Force  
Health Portfolio Holder