

**October 7th 2021 Statement from Dr Janssen:**

To the residents of the Omineca Region,

As a physician in your community, I want to implore those that are unvaccinated to get their vaccinations as quickly as they can. St John Hospital and UHNBC have been in the midst of dealing with a massive increase in COVID in the past weeks. This has led to a surge in the number of ER patients at these facilities. The spread of COVID is being fueled by our very poor local vaccination rates.

Unfortunately, this situation has now caused multiple staff members at St John Hospital to fall ill recently. Given the situation, it is possible that there will be closures of the St John Hospital Emergency Room in the coming days to all but life or limb threatening cases. All other patients will be diverted to health care facilities in other communities.

I would like to highlight that in my time as a physician this is an unprecedented situation at St John Hospital. We have never closed the ER in my 10 years of providing care in Vanderhoof. Please get your COVID vaccine, and please do not take other unnecessary risks with your health. We are working very hard to provide care for everyone. However, we have very limited capacity to provide medical care at this time.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rebecca Janssen, MD CCFP