

April 15, 2020

Nishnawbe Aski Nation COVID-19 Update

- Confirmed COVID-19 cases: 36 in Thunder Bay, 42 in Timmins Region, 4 in Dryden, 2 in Red Lake and 1 in Sioux Lookout.
- We need to ensure that messaging around public health measures and physical distancing are being taken seriously in our communities. Each community must be as vigilant as ever and cannot relax the measures that are in place.
- If someone suspects they have symptoms of COVID-19, it is very important that they not to go to the nursing station without getting instructions first from the nurse over the phone or through telehealth.
 - NAN is developing an infographic on this to help remind members please check the website regularly for updated infographics
- Everyone must act like they have COVID-19 this is not an extraordinary measure, but a measure that every person is being asked to practice.

Funding

 The federal government announced that it is providing \$129.9 million specifically for Yukon, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories (N.W.T).

NAN Trilateral Table

- The weekly Trilateral Table call with Canada and Ontario ADMs took place April 14.
- These calls are valuable places to raise issues that NAN becomes aware of through the NAN COVID-19 Task Team, through NAN Chiefs call and through Tribal Councils and Health Authorities.
- As we have heard on the FNIHB Update call, neither level of government has been able to clearly articulate their plan to respond to COVID-19 in NAN communities.
- The NAN COVID-19 Task Team worked very hard to come up with a tiered response plan for all phases of COVID-19 response in communities. NAN shared this plan with both levels of government.
 - This plan can be customized according to region and at the community level.
- NAN is seeking commitments from Canada/Ontario to work with us to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined through this plan. So far, the plan has been well received and will be circulated to the NAN Chiefs.





Federal Announcement on Rapid Testing

- Health Canada has approved a new rapid test for COVID-19 that can produce results in under an hour, which is expected to alleviate the pressure on public health laboratories and help circumvent testing kit shortages.
- An Ottawa-based company (Spartan Bioscience) received approval over the weekend and will be ready to start shipping tests for the federal and provincial governments.
- After talking to both Canada and Ontario, these are not ready for use in communities yet.
- It is very important to know and understand that there are limitations with COVID-19 tests (including the possibility of false negatives) and that the tests are not replacements for social distancing/isolation measures.
- NAN has commitments from both Ontario/Canada to work with us to understand exactly how and when they will be available for use in communities.

Pandemic Planning

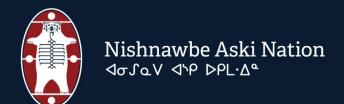
- Pandemic Planning is very important at the community level because it creates a structure that guides progress. Along with a government response, each First Nation needs to be prepared.
- NAN is asking all communities who need assistance with Pandemic Planning to email emergency@nan.ca so that we can connect you with Team Rubicon.
- If your community already has a Pandemic Plan developed, we ask that you send your plan
 to <u>emergency@nan.ca.</u> This so that NAN knows what your plan is and how to best assist
 your community in its operation and implementation.

NAN COVID-19 Task Team

- The NAN COVID-19 Task Team includes: Elders, Physicians, Nurse Practitioners and Emergency Management Experts.
- Mental Health & Substance Use Working Group is working with Dalton & Associates
 to set up a centralized mental health intake process for NAN communities during the time of
 COVID-19. This is to supplement already in place mental health and addiction services.
- Modelling data for NAN territory WAHA and SLFNHA have already started working on this
 for their regions, but there is no specific timeline for when this work will be completed.

Funerals





- Deceased must be handled as if they are still infected with COVID-19.
 - o These rules apply to all deceased, not only those who pass away from COVID-19.
- Ontario's orders limits funerals to 10 people or less.
- During the funeral, mourners should maintain physical distancing (2-meter distance from all other people).
- The NAN COVID-19 Task Team is developing recommendations regarding funerals and celebrations of life during and after COVID-19.

NAN Legal Services & NAN Justice

- Ontario and Superior Courts of Justice continue to be closed.
- Discharge planning and assistance with getting people home is taking place on a case-by-case basis. NAN Legal is currently in the process of developing plans for 7 clients.
- Some challenges that are being faces are:
 - A lack of coordinated approach to housing and self-isolation spaces in Sioux Lookout and Timmins.
 - Transportation from the Kenora District Jail to Sioux Lookout NAN Legal is providing taxis back to Sioux Lookout.
 - NAN Legal has not received additional resources or capacity to complete these additional duties.

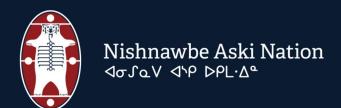
Nishnawbe Aski Police Services - NAPS

- A teleconference took place with the 34 NAPS serviced communities to discuss the enforcement of community public health and safety measures and the Band Council Resolution (BCR) templates. Two additional templates have been developed and will be posted on the NAN website.
 - o A third conference call will take place Monday April 20.
- Calls for services are increasing in the communities with some very serious offences taking place.
- Still having difficulties in sourcing PPE for the officers. Requests have been put into different levels of government.

Infrastructure

- Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) is working directly with communities to assess surge infrastructure needs and the temporary repurposing of existing infrastructure.
- ISC is offering support for the repurposing of infrastructure in community as well as support for the purchasing of necessary supplies, such as cots.





• To access this support, please contact Mandy Wirta mandy.wirta@canada.ca

Education

- COVID-19 Education Emergency Advisory Taskforce is being established and terms of reference is being drafted.
 - Chiefs from the Education Committee have been asked to be part of the taskforce. Chief Robert Beardy and Chief Jason Gauthier have confirmed, and we thank them.
 - o Long-term, medium and immediate action items have been developed.
- The immediate action is to provide resources to the communities that wish to continue delivering their education programs and services.
 - Not only for the students, but teachers and parents also.
- NAN will continue to engage both levels of government on education and will be sending a
 letter to the Provincial Education Minister on accessing Virtual Learning. The Provincial
 schoolboards are able to access this resource and we are hopeful that NAN communities can
 have the same opportunity.
- Medium-term action is to develop a strategy for the communities to working on their teacher recruitment.
- Long-term action is to develop a strategy to prepare for this fall if the schools will remain closed or open.

Communications

- Deputy Grand Chief Fox will be on Wawatay Radio on Thursday at 1:05 pm EST.
- COVID-19 Tools and Resources are being translated into Oji-Cree, Ojibway, and Cree to assist the communities in spreading awareness and public health messaging on COVID-19. They are posted on the NAN website under COVID-19 Tools and Resources as they become available.

Urban Community Members

- NAN has posted specific information for members living off-reserve in urban centres across northwestern Ontario on the NAN website.
 - This includes how to find shelters, food banks, social and mental health services, as well as Indigenous organizations that can assist.
- Please continue to access our website as we are constantly updating it with the most up to date information: www.nancovid19.ca





NEXT CALL: Friday, April 17, 2020 | 1p.m. EST/ 12p.m. CST

