



MAY 7, 2020

Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) COVID-19 Update

Thunder Bay District Health Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed Positive (May 6): 76 • Active Cases: 10 • Resolved Cases: 65 • Deceased: 1
Porcupine Health Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of cases (May 7): 63 • Currently Under Investigation: 334 • Resolved Cases: 48 • Deceased: 4
Northwestern Health Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive tests (May 7): 16 • Pending tests: 939 • Resolved: 16

- If someone in a NAN First Nation community 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.
- 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.
- The province of Ontario has extended the public health restrictions until May 19.
- **Minister Hajdu and Minister Miller will be joining the NAN Chiefs’ call on Monday May 11 at 1p.m. EST | 12p.m. CST.**
 - NAN Chiefs, Tribal Councils and Health Authorities are encouraged to email any questions they would like to ask the either of the Ministers to emergency@nan.ca, so they can prepare to answer the questions on the call.

Trilateral Table

- NAN had the 5th Trilateral Table Call this week.
- We continue to discuss important issues raised by the NAN Chiefs and through the Health Authorities and Tribal Councils.
- Items that were discussed and we will continue to provide updates on:
 - **Funding** – Ministry of Indigenous Affairs Ontario (IAO) Funding Agreements. In addition to the application-based funding, base funding totaling \$4.4M was made available to all First Nation communities, including all NAN communities, to address



core and urgent pandemic needs; all funding has been committed and transfer payment agreements have been distributed to communities to be signed.

- **We would like to remind communities which have not yet done so to review and sign these agreements, so this funding can be flowed to your community.**
- If you have any questions or concerns about your transfer payment agreement, please contact Jemerson James at Jemerson.James@ontario.ca or Melissa Chetty at Melissa.Chetty@ontario.ca.
- The IAO Emergency Response Funding (application-based funding) will be assessed primarily based on funding gaps that communities may be experiencing and that are not part of another ministry/government response.
 - Proposals and inquiries can be submitted to: IAO.COVID19.Funding@Ontario.ca.
- NAN will continue to advocate for the need for further funds at both levels of government.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** – Ministry of Health (MOH), other provincial Ministries, and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) are continuing to work together to ensure the processes are aligned and communicated clearly – we expect a 1-page document will be ready next week.
- **Mental Health Needs** – NAN presented a tele-mental health proposal that was prepared with the NAN COVID-19 Task Team, and there is commitment from ISC and MOH to continue to discuss and refine this proposal through a specific table.
- **Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA)** – received the good news that ISC approved the request for public health management of COVID-19 to be transferred from First Nations & Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) to SLFNHA, and this includes contact tracing. NAN continues to support this great work done by SLFNHA and acknowledges how this further supports the health transformation process in our communities.

Evacuations

- We heard from Assistant Deputy Minister Michael Reid (IAO) and Randy Reid, Deputy Chief, Field Operations, Training & Education from the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) on Monday regarding evacuations and planning.
- Evacuations have to be addressed through the COVID-19 lens this year. The new concept of evacuations is to proceed with shelter in place as long as it is safe to do so.
- We encourage leadership to think about this and start planning given the different needs during this time.
- NAN continues to support communities as needed through advocacy efforts to ensure that safety of members is paramount.

NAN Education

- NAN is developing a website for education resources to be available for the communities.
- A letter is being drafted to Minister Miller to advocate for education planning funding for the upcoming school year.
- At the AFN and COO Education Tables, Deputy Grand Chief Fox is the Ontario representative at both levels. Ontario is at a disadvantage in securing AFN funding.



- NAN has been advised that education funding can be used to address the shortfalls during the COVID-19 crisis. There is currently no written commitment to guarantee full reimbursement of those funds.
- We encourage leadership to reach out to education leaders in the communities to complete the environmental scan to determine what resources are needed, teachers and costs associated.
- A memo has been developed to outline the draft plan for education programs and services in Fall 2020 (attached).

Broadband Concerns

- NAN is working directly with IAO to work on increasing broadband capacity temporarily with a view to a permanent solution.
- Needs/costs to increase bandwidth within the existing fibre network for WJBTN and KNET have been provided to IAO. IAO was to submit an internal proposal for funding to cover the costs of increases for 1 year – we are awaiting a response.
- KNET will be submitting a large proposal to Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) shortly for upgrades to their system.
- KNET was able to secure additional satellite broadband with four First Nations that would increase internet broadband until March 2021; these costs will be covered by ISC and FNIHB.
- The bandwidth can be increased with the existing fibre network, Bell Canada is limited and there are areas to increase bandwidth availability in six communities and the other eight communities we need to gather more information and the security management of that.
- Increases to bandwidth within the current system can be done by purchasing new routers, updating firewalls, managing the current broadband system, and purchasing additional bandwidth from their larger internet service providers (Bell, Ontera).
- KNet confirmed that they will not require community access to complete the interim upgrades, but WJBTN will require access to their equipment building in Moosonee to install the new router.

NAN COVID-19 Task Team

- The province of Ontario has directed all employees in long-term care homes to be tested for COVID-19. There has only been 1 confirmed COVID-19 case of an employee in a long-term care home in the Thunder Bay District.
- The MOH has released several guidance documents for long-term care homes in the province. The Task Team has been reviewing these documents to see how they can be adapted for any long-term care home or Elders residences in NAN territory.
- PPE – continues to be challenging. The Task Team is looking for more streamlined guidance on how to access PPE for all NAN First Nations communities, including the handling and storing of PPE.
- There has been reports of an inflammatory syndrome in children that may be linked to COVID-19. The identification of this inflammatory syndrome is not fully understood at this time and how it is linked to COVID-19. The NAN COVID-19 Task Team will continue to investigate this further.



Ontario's Plan to Reopen/ Ease Restrictions

- At this time, the NAN COVID-19 Task Team recommends to **not** ease or reopen the borders of NAN First Nations communities.
- Discussed business supports and the province's economy with Premier Ford on a call this week – there is an acknowledgment that there needs to be a more cautious and technical approach for communities.
- There will have to be regionalization and flexibility to the re-opening which includes a lag in opening communities fully **which we understand will be fully supported by the Ontario government**.
- Health and Safety continues to be paramount as the guide to reopening and easing restrictions.
- This was also discussed at the Trilateral Table where a working group was struck and will hold further discussions to focus on preventative planning in the upcoming weeks and months.
- The NAN COVID-19 Task Team is developing a document that will be finalized and shared in draft (Monday or Tuesday) so we can discuss further on next Thursday's call and so that Chiefs' can start to have these important discussions at the community level.

NAN Legal Services

- The Board of Directors met on Tuesday to review the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) line by line to provide final edits (draft 9).
- NAN Legal sent back the MOU to the Ministry of Attorney General and Solicitor General for final approval.
- A funding proposal was submitted to Solicitor General to be able to administer the actions outlined in the MOU.

Nishnawbe Aski Police Services (NAPS)

- A conference call took place with all civilian staff to inform them that working from home has been extended to the end of June.
- A NAPS Board of Directors meeting will be taking place next week.

Communications

- Members of the NAN Executive Council will continue to appear on Wawatay Radio on **Tuesday at 12 pm** EST and now on **Friday 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 Communities

- NAN has posted specific information on the NAN website for members living off-reserve in urban centres across northwestern and northeastern Ontario.
 - 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: Monday, May 11, 2020 | 1p.m. EST | 12p.m. CST



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Send all inquiries regarding COVID-19 to emergency@nan.ca

www.nancovid19.ca