



SIoux LOOKOUT FIRST NATIONS HEALTH AUTHORITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Sioux Lookout Area Chiefs and Health Directors

From: Dr. John Guilfoyle, Public Health Physician, SLFNHA

Date: June 22, 2020

Subject: Positive cases of COVID-19 among Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre Staff

Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) has been notified of several COVID-19 cases among the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre (SLMHC) staff. Testing was done as part of surveillance in light of the recent uptick in positive cases in our communities. From 147 swabs, six are positive. This is a relatively small number, but this cluster is concerning that there is more viral activity that we might have appreciated.

This has obvious implications for individuals and communities as Sioux Lookout is the health hub for most communities within the SLFNHA catchment. SLFNHA is working directly with SLMHC and the NWHU and has responded immediately to put all proper measures in place to protect patients, health care givers and the public

The immediate actions that are in place to respond to this increased COVID-19 activity include:

Hostel

The following increased public health measures are in place at the hostel:

1. All staff to wear masks
2. Audit of infection control measures
3. Hand sanitizer at all entrances
4. Strict no visitors
5. Screening on entry

As part of the surveillance strategy, all hostel staff are offered testing.

Northern Clinic

Increased public health measures are in place at the Northern Clinic and a surveillance strategy is activated including testing of northern clinic staff.

Patients returning home after medical travel

Measures are in place to prevent the virus from entering the community. Public health measures for patients of SLMHC and clients of the JMK hostel include:

1. All patients will be offered a test before returning home
2. They do not have to wait for results in Sioux Lookout – they can return home and ensure they wear masks on the plane
3. On arrival in community they will be screened at the airport and transported to where they will quarantine/self-isolate for 14 days in community. If they develop symptoms after returning home, they should be re-swabbed immediately.

Visiting Health Service Providers

A temporary halt on nurses and doctors entering the communities is in place. Doctors and nurses will be tested where appropriate and required to self-monitor for a sufficient amount of time. Communities will be involved in discussions around the return of their physicians.

More information is will follow as the situation develops.

If you have any questions about how to best protect the health of your community, please do not hesitate to contact the following: Emily Paterson, Director of Approaches to Community Wellbeing (emily.paterson@slfnha.com) or Dr. John Guilfoyle, SLFNHA Public Health Physician (John.Guilfoyle@slfnha.com).

cc. James Morris, Executive Director, SLFNHA
SLFNHA Board of Directors
SLFNHA Chiefs Committee on Health
Community Health Directors and Physicians
Sioux Lookout area Tribal Councils
Nishnawbe Aski Nation