



September 3, 2020

Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) COVID-19 Update

Thunder Bay District Health Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Number: 103 (Last cases reported August 24; on August 27, the health unit reported that a recent positive test was incorrect, and so they revised their case count from 104 to 103). • Active: 0 • Recovered: 102 • Deaths: 1
Porcupine Health Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Number: 73 (Last case reported August 24) • Active: 0 • Recovered: 65 • Deaths: 8
Northwestern Health Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Number: 46 • Active: 2 (1 case in Kenora, other case confirmed Aug 24 in Sioux Lookout) • Recovered: 45 • Deaths: 0
Public Health Sudbury & Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Number: 94 (Last case reported August 22) • Active: 1 • Recovered: 91 • Deaths: 2
Timiskaming Health Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Number: 19 (last case reported on July 28) • Active: 0 • Recovered: 19 • Deaths: 0

- The NAN Executive Council sends their condolences to the families and friends of Elder Timmin Wabasse from Nibinamik, Councillor Robert Kakegamic from Sandy Lake, former Chief of MoCreebec, George Small, and to those who have lost loved ones recently.
- Grand Chief Solomon shared a few words in honour of the late George Small
- **SAVE THE DATE: NAN Chiefs Virtual Fall Assembly - October 20/21.** We are starting to develop the agenda and invite Chiefs to provide feedback on items they would like to see covered.
- The NAN Executive Council has made a decision to gradually re-open the NAN offices in both Thunder Bay and Timmins in some capacity on Monday October 5th. We are working hard to ensure that we do this in a way that is respectful of all the needs and concerns of our staff, while keeping in mind the important work that we are doing for NAN communities.
- **PLEASE SEND ANY NEW COMMUNITY GUIDELINES/ RESTRICTIONS THAT YOUR COMMUNITY HAS IN PLACE TO emergency@nan.ca.**



COVID-19 Situation in Manitoba

- Manitoba has increased their vigilance due to an increasing number of COVID-19 cases in the south of the province.
 - www.manitoba.ca/covid19 has current information on the pandemic situation in Manitoba; there are currently 454 active cases in the province, with 28 new cases added August 31, 18 new cases added September 1, and 13 new cases added September 2.
- With the increased number of cases in southern Manitoba, public health announced on August 31 that they will be re-implementing travel restrictions to northern Manitoba and remote communities, effective Thursday, Sept. 3. In addition to these restrictions, all travellers are asked to respect any restrictions that First Nation communities have in place.
- All visitors arriving at health-care facilities in Manitoba are required to wear a non-medical mask.
 - This extends to outpatients attending appointments at clinics within hospitals and health centres throughout the province.
- As many NAN community members travel to Winnipeg for necessary medical care, communities should ensure that there are procedures and measures in place to support these community members while minimizing the risk of COVID-19 to the community.
 - These should be the same public health measures that are in place for members who travel outside of the community in Ontario, such as self-isolating for 14 days upon their return, self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19, and being encouraged to seek testing if they become symptomatic or are concerned about potential exposure.
- Whether community members are at home or in a major city, the same public health measures should always be followed. Do not go out if you feel sick, practice proper hand hygiene, cover your cough, and maintain physical distancing when you are with people outside your household.
 - If you cannot physically distance, wear a cloth mask or other face covering.

NAN COVID-19 Task Team

- The Task Team met August 25 and September 1 to discuss a variety of issues, including Elder care issues in long-term care homes, immunization campaigns and vaccine strategies for NAN First Nations, and critical care in communities during COVID-19.
 - The Task Team, along with SLFNHA and WAHA are looking at the roll out of rapid testing units to ensure these testing units comes out as quickly as possible to the NAN communities. Work is being done to get through some roadblocks and to get the community health workers trained.
- A revised version of the Guidance for Funerals and Bereavement during COVID-19 document was posted to the website on August 28 and shared on social media. It can be accessed online at <https://nancovid19.ca/?p=3069>.
- The Task Team members will meet with First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) pharmacy representatives to discuss the nursing station formulary and how it should be stocked to respond to COVID-19 treatment needs in the event of weather delays to medical transportation.
- The NAN COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Working Group has been formed and held its first meeting on September 1.
 - Membership includes representatives from WAHA, SLFNHA, Wabun Tribal Council, Matawa First Nations, and the Ontario Northern Supply Chain.



- The objectives of this working group include mapping out processes and funding for PPE; improving communication between communities, Tribal Councils, and health authorities regarding PPE supplies; and developing a regional strategy for PPE.
- Dr. Banerji spoke of the importance of the influenza vaccine and the necessity of getting it into NAN First Nations.

Tele-Mental Health Initiative

- On August 10, the **Mental Health and Addictions Pandemic Response Program** went live at **1-844-NAN-HOPE (1-844-626-4673)** and www.nanhope.ca.
 - This program is available to all NAN First Nation members, whether they are living on or off reserve.
 - NAN HOPE can be accessed through phone, text, or live chat.
 - The program offers 3 services:
 - 24/7 toll-free rapid access to confidential crisis services.
 - Rapid access to clinical and mental health counselling.
 - Navigators who provide connection to existing mental health and addictions support services in home communities and the region.

Forestry, Environment & Ontario Bill 197 – Economic Recovery Act, 2020

- A NAN Chiefs conference call will take place the week of September 21 to discuss Bill 197 – *Economic Recovery Act, 2020*, and other items related to forestry and environment. Formal correspondence will follow to confirm the date and time.
- NAN encourages Chief and Councils to begin drafting their own environmental bylaws.
- Resolution 19/14: *Establishment of Chiefs Committee on Climate Change, Environment, and Impacts of Forestry* - A terms of reference has been developed for the Chiefs Committee that will be sent out along with a request for Chiefs to join the committee.
- A template letter is being prepared by NAN to be shared with the NAN Chiefs to submit your concerns on Bill 197 to the province of Ontario.

NAN Education

- On August 28, NAN put together a last minute but urgent meeting with ISC Minister Marc Miller to raise our concerns about the lack of funding and planning for education throughout the territory.
 - Our team worked tirelessly to set this up, and it turned out to be very worthwhile.
 - The federal government announced a \$112 million in funding for First Nations to ensure a safe return to school on-reserve.
 - NAN was asked to support the individual NAN First Nations to submit their plans - 23 communities have already provided their information.
 - The details on how the funding will be distributed have not been released yet and NAN was told that First Nations who require funding over and above their allocation are encouraged to submit proposals.
- NAN received a letter from Minister Rickford and Minister Lecce to inform us that there will be an announcement from the province of \$12 million over the next three years for student safety. We are awaiting details on the distribution plan.



