



January 28, 2021

Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) COVID-19 Update

Thunder Bay District Health Unit	Total Number: 923 • Active: 170 with 1 hospitalized, 1 in the ICU (32 new cases reported on January 28) • Recovered: 727 • Deaths: 26
Porcupine Health Unit	Total Number: 241 • Active: 59 (2 new cases announced January 28 in the Hearst and Hornepayne area) • Recovered: 170 • Deaths: 12
Northwestern Health Unit	Total Number: 256 • Active: 16 plus 1 case who is currently in the catchment area, but usually resides elsewhere (2 new cases announced on January 27, 1 in Kenora region and 1 in the Sioux Lookout region) • Recovered: 239 • Deaths: 1
Public Health Sudbury & Districts	Total Number: 482 • Active: 82 (5 new cases reported January 27) • Recovered: 393 • Deaths: 7
Timiskaming Health Unit	Total Number: 89 • Active: 3 (last new cases announced January 22) • Recovered: 85 • Deaths: 1

NAN Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler

- We acknowledge and thank Elder Ananias Spence for his opening prayer and guidance shared with us, including the recommendation to consider holding blessing ceremonies over the vaccine, as part of community vaccination clinics.
- NAN congratulates Chief Hunter on Peawanuck's successful vaccination clinic this week.
- Peawanuck is the first NAN community to have held a community-wide vaccination clinic in Phase 1. We thank Peawanuck's local pandemic team, Council Members, community members, Ornge, WAHA, and everyone who contributed to the success of the vaccination clinic.
- There will be a debrief to identify lessons learned that may be applied to other communities.



- NAN is actively monitoring the outbreaks occurring in our communities.
- All possible avenues will be pursued to ensure communities have the support they require to stay healthy and safe.

Update – IAO Deputy Minister Batise; General Hillier, Ontario COVID 19 Task Force

- Vaccinations are happening as quickly as possible at long term care (LTC) homes, higher risk retirement homes and elder facilities across Ontario.
- Ontario awaits the arrival of 26,000 doses of Pfizer and more Moderna next week in order to complete the LTC homes and elder facilities.
- Urban members will be vaccinated eventually, once the LTC homes have been completed.

Information from Dr. Homer Tien

- In response to a question on the medication, “Colchicine”, and its use for COVID-19 patients, Dr. Tien responded that the study on this has not been published yet.
- The best way to ensure that enough vaccine is brought to communities is for Community Coordinators to get a head count and register people in advance, including community members and non band members, such as teachers.
- The Moderna vaccine is not approved for people under 18. In circumstances where a person turns 18 within one month, arrangements will be made to ensure that they can get the vaccine when they turn 18.

NAN COVID-19 Task Team – Mae Katt

Active Cases in NAN Territory

- Since January 8, there have been 50 positive cases in 10 NAN communities. 39 of those cases have been along the Highway 11 Corridor.
 - Aroland First Nation: 1 active case
 - Long Lake #58 First Nation: 12 active cases
 - Ginoogaming First Nation: 5 active cases (out of 6 total cases confirmed since January 13)
 - Constance Lake First Nation: 10 active cases (out of 20 total cases confirmed since January 16)
- SLFNHA:
 - Eabametoong First Nation: 2 active cases in off-reserve community members.
 - Webequie First Nation: 4 active cases (1 announced January 27, 3 announced January 28)
 - Poplar Hill First Nation: 1 case (announced January 28)
 - Pikangikum First Nation: 2 cases (announced January 28)
 - Lac Seul First Nation: 1 case in Frenchman’s Head (announced January 28)
 - Nibinamik: 1 case, a contractor who has left the community (announced January 28)
- WAHA:
 - No active cases in NAN communities. 1 case announced on January 27 in Moosonee.



Manitoba Update

- Manitoba remains at a Red/Critical provincial response level.
- On January 23, limited changes to Manitoba's public health orders took effect, which slightly increased gathering limits and permitted some businesses and services to reopen.
- These changes do not apply to Northern Manitoba or Churchill.
- On January 26, the Manitoba Premier announced that all travelers to Manitoba from outside the province are required to self-isolate for two weeks.
- As of January 27, there were 2,696 active cases among First Nations people in Manitoba, of which 2,260 cases were on-reserve.
- 78% of the active cases in Manitoba on January 27 were among First Nations people.
- 132 First Nations people have lost their lives to COVID-19 in Manitoba.
- On January 27, the Manitoba government released a vaccination plan that recognized four key groups, including First Nations communities. The highest priority members of each group have started to receive the vaccine.

Task Team Update

- Ontario remains in a state of emergency with a stay-at-home order in effect, which is expected to remain in place until at least February 11.
- On January 27, Ontario announced 1,670 new cases of COVID-19. This was the lowest number of new COVID-19 cases in more than two months.
- On January 28, case numbers trended upwards again with 2,093 new cases announced.
- The Task Team is focusing efforts on effectively supporting the COVID-19 vaccine roll out.
- The Task Team recognizes that the strongest advocates for immunization are community champions, including Elders, youth and adults who can build trust, share knowledge, and address fears about the vaccine with kindness and understanding.

COVID Variants

- New variants of the COVID-19 virus include variants first identified in the United Kingdom (UK), South Africa, and Brazil.
- Highlights the importance of following public health measures that reduce the risk of transmission, including wearing face coverings, maintaining physical distance from people outside of your household, washing and sanitizing hands, and avoiding non-essential travel.
- It is unclear whether the variants cause more severe illness or an increased risk of death.
- There is growing concern that the UK variant may cause more severe illness for some people.
- The UK variant (known as B117) has been detected in Ontario, including in an outbreak at a nursing home in Barrie and in the Simcoe Muskoka region. This variant is more transmissible, but the vaccine is expected to be effective.
- The other two variants have not yet been reported in Ontario.
- Measures implemented by Leadership and pandemic teams have been effective at limiting the spread of COVID-19 so far. Community members should continue to follow their guidance.



NAN Hope

- NAN Hope can be accessed through 1-844-NAN-HOPE (1-844-626-4673) and www.nanhope.ca.
- As of last week, NAN Hope has connected **more than 235 clients** to care.
- NAN Hope offers:
 - 24/7 toll-free rapid access to confidential crisis services.
 - Rapid access to clinical and mental health counselling.
 - Navigators who provide connections to existing mental health and addictions support services in home communities and the region.
- NAN Hope is **not** just a crisis line. The navigation and referral to ongoing care is an important part of the service and helping clients move forward with their healing journey.
- Traditional Knowledge Keepers and Healers are now part of NAN Hope's roster of counsellors.
- Clients can also be connected to counsellors who speak the 3 language dialects across NAN.
- Available to NAN members living in urban areas.
- For access to informational materials on NAN Hope, including brochures and flyers, please contact emergency@nan.ca.

NAPS Update – NAPS Chief Roland Morrison

- For the weeks of January 11 to 24, there were 15 major incidents.
- Thank you to Chief Hunter for allowing NAPS officers to be included in the vaccination clinic in Peawanuck. Two NAPS officers received their first doses on January 26th.
- Additional officers have been deployed to Constance Lake to assist with enforcement.
- NAPS officers will be instructed to carry out enforcement measures going forward. There will be no more warnings.
- Matawa Tribal Council has informed NAPS that Anna Betty Achneepineskum is the new Matawa representative on the NAPS Police Board.
- Thank you to Peter Moonias for his years of service and contributions to the NAPS Board.
- For communities served by NAPS, the NAPS Board Office will contact Leadership soon to provide conference call details for a meeting on February 23. The purpose of this call is to update the Leadership on the status of funding negotiations.
- The first round of negotiations commenced this week.

Justice Update – DGC Derek Fox; Danielle Wood, Area Director, NAN Legal

- Outbreaks at correctional institutions continue to occur and remain a priority issue for NAN.
- 21 new cases at the Thunder Bay jail were announced today.
- There are potentially 49 active cases in total at the jail, and potentially 55 cases at the correctional centre.
- Some inmates have been transferred to Toronto South Detention Centre.
- For inmate releases, the Thunder Bay jail and correctional centre are working with the public health unit and requiring all persons released to isolate for two weeks. There is an isolation shelter in Thunder Bay that is available for this purpose.
- There is a need for improved communication around discharge planning, adherence to isolation plans, respect for community protocols, as well better supports and plans for inmates who are released.
- Grand Chief Fiddler and DGC Fox met with SOLGEN Minister Sylvia Jones and Deputy Minister Deborah Richardson on January 28th following the Chiefs Call.
- This meeting resulted in a commitment from SOLGEN to explore all options to address



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communication issues that have been raised. NAN will continue to strongly advocate for a strengthened MOU between NAN, NALSC, SOLGEN and MAGIJD that would place a renewed focus on the safety of NAN communities, while respecting the privacy rights of individuals released from institutions during the pandemic.

- NAN Legal is available to assist community members and Leadership in facilitating communications and assisting with travel arrangements.
- Leadership and community members are encouraged to contact NAN Legal directly for assistance and may direct inquiries to Danielle Wood, Area Director [direct Line: (807) 766-7076; Fax: (807) 622-3024; email: dwood@nanlegal.on.ca].

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 provide assistance.
- Please visit www.nancovid19.ca. It is updated daily with the most current information.

Closing

- **Town Hall for NAN members on Friday at 12:30 pm EST / 11:30 am CST**
Panel members will include Health Minister Patty Hajdu, Dr. Bogoch, and Mae Katt. The Town Hall can be accessed through the following link: <https://cutt.ly/ej6dsWB>. Links to this event have been sent to NAN Leadership, health directors, pandemic teams, and can also be found on all of NAN's social media platforms, as well as the NAN website. Please send questions for the panel to jthompson@nan.ca.
- **The First Nations Emergency Management Conference** will be held on **Feb 3 & 4, 2021**. This conference will be an orientation to First Nation emergency management and will cover multiple issues, with an emphasis on preparation, mitigation, and youth initiatives. Registration information can be found on our website.
- If you need any help, or any information, please do not hesitate to engage our Task Team at emergency@nan.ca.

NEXT PHASE 1 VACCINE ROLL OUT CALL: February 4 at 1:00 p.m. EST | 12 p.m. CST

NEXT REGULAR CALL: February 11 | 1p.m. EST | 12p.m. CST



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