

**COVID-19 Tribal Leadership Session Minutes**  
**March 23, 2020**

The call started at 11:00 am and ended at 1:00 pm. Several people called in, estimated at least 75 people. There was an initial concern that “all circuits were busy”. Another line was added and NSHC will share both numbers for the call tomorrow, Tuesday, March 24, 2020. If you cannot get through initially, NSHC recommends you continue to call.

<b>AGENDA ITEMS</b>	<b>DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION</b>
Introduction to Meeting – Angie Gorn, NSHC CEO	<p>Angie gave an introduction regarding the purpose, standing agenda, and frequency of the call. The daily call will be at 11 am Monday through Friday and will include NSHC Administration and Medical Staff. The Standing Agenda includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Current Coronavirus Update- # of confirmed cases in Region</li> <li>2) Medical Staff Preparedness</li> <li>3) Administration Presentation of Frequency Asked Questions- Note- any questions may be send to Reba Lean at <a href="mailto:rlean@nshcorp.org">rlean@nshcorp.org</a> anytime or text to 907-434-1927 and they will be answered during the 11:00 am call.</li> </ol>
Medical Staff Briefing – Dr. Mark Peterson, Medical Director	<p>Dr. Mark Peterson gave a briefing and also went over the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 32 COVID-19 in Alaska</li> <li>- No confirmed cased in the Norton Sound Region</li> <li>- Tests are being run, but no positives to-date</li> <li>- We are prepared for a positive case when it hits; NSHC has well qualified medical staff and enough of them</li> <li>- Clinic is still open for urgent and emergent cases, staffing has been scaled back to practice social distancing</li> <li>- Nurse call line should be utilized if patients are concerned if they have COVID-19</li> <li>- We will continue to care for all patient needs</li> </ul>
Frequently Asked Questions – Angie Gorn	<p>Angie went over a handout that was prepared of frequently asked questions that people may have. The handout will be distributed to the villages for dissemination to all residents in each community.</p>
How NSHC is identifying and managing Coronavirus in Region – Angie Gorn	<p>Angie presented a step-by-step scenario if someone suspects they may have COVID-10 in your community. The attached handout outlines the steps that will be followed if someone has symptoms and tests negative or positive.</p>
Incident Commanders – Angie Gorn	<p>Angie went over the incident command centers and clinical leadership which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Gary Kulka: Nome Primary Care and Cough/Cold (Respiratory) Clinic;</li> <li>- Dr. Terry O’Malia: Nome ER, Acute Care, and supporting ancillary services;</li> <li>- Dr. Mark Peterson: Village Clinics;</li> <li>- Dr. Timothy Lemaire: Infection Control and Public Health Prevention Education</li> </ul>
Questions – The call was opened up for questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Is it possible to establish our own testing lab in the region?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Although we would like to be able to run the test in our labs, there isn’t capability of that. We are hoping the country will develop more tests that can be done in our labs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>We have some hazmat suits here in Elim and we are wondering if NSHC would like us to take pictures of the supply and send it to Reba Lean?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Please send photos to NSHC and we can assess if those can be used.</li> <li>▪ Charlene Saclamana said that each one of the villages has a 30 gallon oil spill response kit that contains hazmat suits and two N95 masks. They also have another oil spill response kit and they do contain Tyvek suit covers, rubber gloves and boot covers. Will email list of</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<p>information to Reba.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ N95 masks can be used in the clinic, so please bring those N95 masks there and take photos of the rest and email to rlean@nshcorp.org.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>How worried should we be about the cases in Anchorage that were not travel related?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are currently no cases in Nome and no cases in the villages, so it is currently not widespread. Our understanding is that it should be generally safe for someone to go from Nome to the village. Also, it should be safe for someone to go to one village to another. People who can get back to their home village, should get back to their village.</li> <li>▪ Anyone who has gone out of region should self-isolate for 14 days. Family who has traveled should self-isolate. Anyone who has traveled and has fever should self-isolate.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Anyone who has been in Anchorage for medical or other travel what should they do?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 14 days should self-isolate, monitor temp and hand wash.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Are there special protocols in place with ANMC for people who need to travel etc?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If it is not urgent, people should not go.</li> <li>▪ We are limiting travel, if someone does need to be seen, we take patients on a case by case basis. We do need doctors on both ends(at NSHC and at ANMC or other hospitals) who need to approve. We want to wait 30 days on anything that can wait.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Test kits are available on every site, is this the case for every clinic?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes .</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Is there a risk for Environmental Services staff with handling waste and other items?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ People need to be safe and cautious, gloves should be used, don't want bodily fluids of anyone who is sick lying around. Be cautious, and elderly and immune compromised people should not handle those items.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>How do we know our flights will not stop bringing us food?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We've recommended, similar to Unalakleet, that flights still bring mail and cargo. Note, this might not be everyday, several days of the week based on one of the airlines NSHC has spoken too. We are able to bring patients back to Nome if they can ride on the cargo flights. We are also able to fly our med staff in and out as needed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>There was a post on facebook about Los Angelos and when they are fueling up, the virus was being spread by fuel pumps. Suggestion was made to sterilize the pumps.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Would recommend to all, wash your hands after you have touched any surface; wash hands with soap and water because the virus can be on any surface like the gas pumps, counters in grocery store and it is best practice to wash your hands very frequently. That is how you prevent the spread to eyes, nose, and mouth.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Is it an option to not admit people in the hospital who have COVID-19? Can these patients be sent to Anchorage? May spread more throughout</b></li> </ul>
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	<p><b>Nome if kept in our region.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is quite contagious, but please note, 80% of patients who get the virus get over it pretty well. Patients severely impacted are the immune- compromised and elderly. We expect most patients who come in will be able to quarantine at home. That is the safest and best thing to do and to also have a mask on. Those that are too ill at home will come in to Acute Care and be treated by our staff. They will use iv fluids, negative pressure room etc. Those that are profoundly ill will be sent to Anchorage for intensive care and ventilation. If Anchorage is overwhelmed we will not be able to care for them. We have good public health practices in place, and we have good plans in place.</li> <li>○ <b>Is there a protocol for those who cannot go home or are not recommended to go home due to overcrowding? Are other items being lined up for them?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, we are in the process of securing alternative locations such as hotels, armory, and other facilities in Nome. These sites are being explored for quarantine. Each of our villages are also looking at securing sites; schools, city buildings, IRA, Corporate office etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>We have 5 ventilators now, are we trying to get more?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We have requests pending for more ventilators.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Is someone at the hospital working to get beds or mattress in community spaces?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will work with the communities if items are needed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Are people required to use nebulizer treatment for those needing respiratory treatments?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discouraging nebulizers for COVID-19 response (it can actually spread the virus more) and should use inhalers instead.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Should we wait to have all the symptoms before calling nurse call line?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Anytime you have a concern please call the nurse call line. If you haven't traveled beyond Nome your risk of COVID-19 is very low. Right now when we know it is not community spread. People who have fever and cough should not be overly concerned that you might have been exposed to get it. Do what you would always do, do home therapy. If you have a low grade fever, stay at home and rest. If you are someone who has traveled somewhere and are having coughs you are more likely to have the flu because we are still in flu season.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Will there be food from Bering Strait School District doing out to the village students for lunch?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Goal is to get the meals out tomorrow, Tuesday, March 24, 2020, to the villages.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>For chronic patients that are taking aspirin and needing to go out, should they wear a mask?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unless this patient is 60 years or older and/or immunocompromised they are still at low risk, even though they take aspirin. However, anyone who has traveled to Anchorage needs to quarantine for 14 days. People will be coming back quickly if they are coming from Anchorage or beyond. Preferably they should quarantine by themselves and not with elders.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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- **There was youth basketball in Anchorage and a lot of them were in big crowds. What should they do?**
  - Anyone who has returned from Anchorage in the last 14 days should quarantine. Call nurse call line and see if they need to go to clinic if they have symptoms. It's not a very high risk, but it is a risk. More likely if someone does not show symptoms in that time they will likely not have the virus.
- **Should pregnant women be working or quarantine?**
  - The virus does not pass from mother to baby. We are encouraging expecting mothers to wash hands. Someone comes to Nome for delivery we have a process in place to protect viral spread from mom to baby.
- **Is there a time when all travel might stop? For instance our post master is wearing mask and gloves. If the virus can stay on packages for 3 days should we be worried about our hand carries and cargo?**
  - If you touch something touched by other people then was your hands.
- **1918 flu epidemic in the fall of that year, it came back more severe. It was stronger version of that same virus. Is this the same that we should expect?**
  - We shouldn't compare it to be the same. They are working on vaccinations, but it will be a year or longer until one is available.
  - Unless there is a release from CDC DHHS regarding changing recommendations we recommend practicing all precautions in place until further notice.
- **Is NSHC still scheduling OB appointments for women from the village to travel to Nome?**
  - Would like to continue with pregnant women traveling at 20 weeks. First prenatal visit is being done via telemedicine now.
- **Are there enough thermometers for those who need to self-quarantine? Can NSHC provide?**
  - For any community needing the items we can ship out.
- **Should/Could we have community meetings? Post signs? Or other forms?**
  - For any community that wants to have a meeting we will call into meeting (However, keep your group size small, no more than 10 people). Use the cell number to let Angie know. We want to get as much information out to our communities through whatever channels are needed. If you have a larger village, we recommend splitting up the presentation and hosting the meeting at several different times to reduce the volume of people meeting together at one time.
- **Are the Physician Assistants still going to the villages as they were before?**
  - Yes, we are keeping everyone here as we can. We are quarantining anyone for 14 days if necessary in Nome before sending the providers to the villages.
- **What about behavioral health appointments?**
  - Those will be done through telemedicine.
- **In the event a health aide gets sick what do we do?**
  - We have doctors and midlevels in Nome that we can send if we need to the villages.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>What if someone has a high risk pregnancy should they still deliver in Anchorage or should they deliver in Nome?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Patient should talk to their provider.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Is the test for COVID-19 a swab test in the nostril?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>If I was told to use a mask and gloves for my medical appointment in Anchorage who should I contact to get the supplies from?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ You can contact your nurse case manager/care coordinator and they should be able to help.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Are we able to get Shishmaref and Unalakleet’s travel restriction examples on their conditions and possibly a standardized one for our communities to use?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We will get Shishmaref’s and Unalakleets notices posted and sent out.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>If someone is in my household that needs to be quarantined what should I do?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quarantine is a place to sleep with a bathroom. The space must be constantly disinfected, keep your distance, do not share forks, cups, plates.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>If we need to house patients with the virus will NSHC help with fuel?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Suggestion of using old clinic to be a site of housing. Each community’s needs will be assessed case- by- case and we will figure out what the space looks like in each community. We will work together. We will start to make supply lists for quarantining.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>How much time until all this goes away?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At this time we are looking at 2-3 months for sure, but it is unknown.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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Ending remarks – Angie	<p>We care about you and we are here for you. We know we can’t always do it fast enough but we will do what we can. We have staff working around the clock and in health care we are unable to completely shut our doors and go home to be with our families to social distance. Please take the time to thank your local medical teams and health care support workers when you can. They will appreciate your gratitude. This meeting was a two-hour long meeting (11:00 am-1:00 pm) and we do not anticipate them being this long, but we are available each day as long as you have questions.</p>
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