

**COVID-19 Tribal Leadership Session Minutes  
May 5, 2020**

Angie Gorn, CEO, NSHC	Reba Lean, NSHC	Mark Peterson, MD, Medical Director, NSHC
Kelly Bogart, NSHC	Megan MacKiernan, NSHC	Carol Charles, NSHC
Kristen Timbers, NSHC	Cameron Piscoya, NSHC	Megan Alvanna-Stimpfle
Toby, Golovin	Nina Wideman, Bering Air	Roy Ashenfelter, Kawerak
Jeanie McConnell, Kawerak	Blanche Garnie, Teller	Sean Lee, NSHC
Rachel Lee, NSHC	Joleen Oleson, Kawerak	Lloyd Kiyutelluk, Shishmaref
Tiffany Martinson, NEC	Joanne Keyes, Native Village of Wales	Charles Swanson, Native Village of Koyuk
Charlie Brown, Golovin	Marie Katcheak, Stebbins	John Waghiyi
Dorothy Barr, Native Village of White Mountain	Amy Hollis, NSHC	Tracy McGarry, Kawerak
Jason Harrel, NSHC	Opik Ahkinga, City of Diomede	Deborah, Wales

\*Over 40 people attended today's meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION
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) Prayer</li> <li>2) Medical Staff Briefing</li> <li>3) Comments and Questions</li> </ol> <p>Note- Any questions may be sent to Reba Lean at <a href="mailto:rean@nshcorp.org">rean@nshcorp.org</a> anytime or text to 907-434-1927 and they will be answered during the 11:00 am call.</p>
Prayer	Prayer was given
Medical Staff Briefing – Dr. Peterson, Medical Director	<p><b>Dr. Peterson gave updates on the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alaska: 1 new case in the last 24 hours, 371 cases, 277 recovered, 94 active cases</li> <li>- ANMC: 13 outpatient, 0 inpatient</li> <li>- NSHC: 1 positive, 1 recovered, 737 tested, do not have negative and pending amounts right now</li> <li>- Village data:</li> <li>- Some villages have not quiet started testing, White Mountain 12.8%, Diomede 10%, Nome 9.3%, Golovin 10.8%, Elim 6%, Gambell 7% ,Saint Michael 4.9%, Savoonga 4.1%, Unalakleet 6.1%, If you do not hear your village you are probably sitting under 4% but it is probably because you haven't really started your testing and that will be coming this week and next week (Chart below was provided after meeting with all of the percentages for each community)</li> <li>- Over half of the villages are over the 5% and the rest are not that far behind</li> <li>- We will be starting mandatory testing for clinic employees that have any interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- with patients</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Still continue to offer community testing in the tent in front of NSHC Monday – Friday 10am – 2pm</li> <li>- We have talked about kids together in group and there were some concern, I did mentioned to consider getting them tested, it's a great ideal, it will be reassuring if they are negative and not passing around in a group</li> </ul>

- ANMC is opening back up for elective surgery, if anyone had a surgery pending let your provider or clinic know and let them know you are wanting to get back on the list

Village Community	% of Population Tested
Brevig Mission	2.6
Elim	6.0
Gambell	7.0
Golovin	10.8
Koyuk	2.4
Little Diomede	10.7
Nome	9.3
Saint Michael	4.9
Savoonga	4.1
Shaktoolik	1.2
Shishmaref	1.3
Stebbins	1.0
Teller	0.8
Unalakleet	6.1
Wales	1.2
White Mountain	12.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.3</b>

**Strategy for getting back to doing village work:**

- There have been some patient care that has been neglected because of this pandemic
- We know that it is a safe time now for some of our providers to be getting back to some of the villages to provide some care
- Any providers that we send out, as we always have, will have done their quarantine in Nome or will have been in Nome for weeks/months and have not traveled outside the region
- Every providers that goes out the village will have been tested within 48 hours of going out to the village
- We have no active cases in Nome now that we know of and have tested 10% of our population
- We know that were in a safe place to be living and safe place to send our providers from to your village for care
- We are going to have optometry, physical therapy, and audiology, starting to head back to some villages
- For the month of May we specifically have the following villages on the schedule: Savoonga, White Mountain, Brevig, Shishmaref, Wales, Shaktoolik, Golovin, Elim, Teller and Unalakleet
- Into early June we have: Little Diomedede, Gambell
- We know there are travel bans in place with all of the villages and we feel that it is important for eye care, audiology, and physical therapy to start to see selective patients in the village again
- Rather than bringing all the patients to Nome we will have our providers go out, just like we sent out our ultrasound technician out to the villages instead of bringing the pregnant women to Nome and she went out and safely did that
- We have put a letter together requesting all the regional villages to allow selected providers to go out and provide level of care
- We will be sending the letter out to village leaders, tribal leaders
- The letter says: this is Norton Sound, we have some providers who want coming out, we are going to do this in a safe manner like we did the ultrasounds, providers will be tested, we will ask approval from the leaders for the trips
- All that needs to be done is a response approving the letter by submitting a signed document and email to us
- We have not asked all individual permission yet but we will be sending letters to everyone
- We will not go unless we have approval
- If there are other services that your village is in need of we want to hear about that
- We feel it's a safe time, there are some things that we have not been able to get to because of the pandemic
- If your village has a need for certain medical services by emailing Reba Lean at [rean@nshcorp.org](mailto:rean@nshcorp.org)
- Let us know as tribal leaders if you would like to get ramped up and going again with services

**Travel ban extension:**

- We are encouraging travel ban extension through August 1<sup>st</sup> for all regional villages
- There is a letter that already went out that details Norton Sound stance which states: Please continue your current travel ban through August 1<sup>st</sup> and we feel that would be the best for the region, we do not know of the virus in your village and we would like to keep it that way and to do that is to limit travel and we would encourage to extend travel bans until August 1<sup>st</sup>. If you would like us to meet with your tribal council we can do that and participate and answer questions

**Dental:**

- Dental procedures are higher risk if the patient has the virus and they doctor has uses a tool that could spread the virus around
- This is why we are requiring to test dental patients and is really the best situation to make sure patients are negative for the virus
- Most dental companies do not have testing available and are struggling on how to return to dental work
- We do have testing and we have it in Nome
- We will be bringing patients to Nome for dental
- Dental patients will come and have a 2 day visit
- Day 1 will be testing and day 2 will be the treatment and head back to your community
- Patients in Nome can call and make an appointment
- Those in regional villages will be brought in if it's an emergent or urgent situation
- Do know that they will start doing some orthodontist exam, evaluation, and treatments (braces and straighten of the teeth) this is a lower risk evaluation so they will be accepting those patients as well
- It will be a little while before they are doing drilling of cavities but will be coming eventually
- Will start with the low risk procedures for now
- If you are in the village and are having dental pain which is considered dental emergency we can get you seen
- We have a strategy to of testing every dental patient that comes in
- We will do things in a safe matter

**Reminder:**

- Even though cases are down in the state, we have no cases in the region, and the sun is out, social distancing, masks, and washing hands are going to continue to be important during the summer
- This is kind of our new normal for now
- Enjoy the sunshine, enjoy the weather, do it in a smart fashion
- Get tested if you have not been tested
- If your village was not above the 5% support your community and get tested, this includes Brevig, Koyuk, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, Stebbins, Teller, and Wales who are just starting off and getting tested going

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION
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Survey – Megan MacKiernan

- Survey:**
- 140 completed survey's
  - Testing experience question had an average score of 8.6 (0 being the worst 10 being the best)
  - How likely would you recommend the test question had an average score of 9.2 (0 being wouldn't recommend and 10 would be recommending)
  - Winner: Sweat shirts- Helena Otton – Koyuk
  - 1 survey per person
  - Easiest way to do that is to text COVID to 833-321-0166
  - The survey questions will come to your phone
  - Disclaimer: standard text rates will apply
  - If you do not have a phone paper surveys are available

Norton Sound Update – Angie Gorn

- Summer Internship:**
- Norton Sound Health Corporation will offer the summer internship this summer for those college students returning this summer and we will make sure that is announced and send communication to all tribal councils as well
  - We solicit applications through June, we will hold interviews by phone, and the start date will most likely be June 1<sup>st</sup>
  - We are making students aware that the internship will have a very special theme it will teach them and give them experience regarding emergency preparedness so there may be some alternative role they may be asked to fill, may be asked to take temperatures or deliver meals but it will be a good experience and wanted to make sure there were job opportunity for students this summer
  - More will follow

Home Cleaning Supplies – Sean Lee

- Home Cleaning Supplies:**
- Reminder that we are in the middle of doing the community accessment for the home cleaning supplies
  - We received one back from Koyuk
  - Sent another reminder out via email
  - Looking to get items distribute as quickly as possible
  - Starting to see material come in
  - Can contact Sean 434-0688 or Emma Pate at 443-3308 with any questions

Question and Comments

- o **If you are in Nome than you go home and go back there is a potential for the patient to pick up COVID when they return home before going back, that is one consideration to think about.**
  - Dental runs their department; they will make sure they have negative tests before they are seen. It will not always be a two day thing. It's really a 2 hour test and if the patient is in town I'm sure they may be able to get them swabbed. They will send them to lab which is 50 feet down the hall; they will get a swab, and within 2 hours should get results back. Not every patient will be a two day patient. A lot of patients could get tested and seen the same day. That is dentals call as they slowly reopen. They will be testing. I don't foresee a lot of people getting tested and going home. If they have are negative today and go home and come back tomorrow they will not have picked up the virus and be spreading it around in one day.
  - If someone is in the village and has an emergency dental situation they

will be brought in to Nome and they will have a two day visit. Day 1 they will get tested, day 2 they will get seen. If it is an emergency and they have to be seen same day it is possible to bring them in get them tested, get the negative test results, and get them treated all in the same day. It's going to be mostly the village patients where the traveling requires testing on day 1 and treatment on day 2. There are locations Unalakleet and Savoonga where dental treatments happen. We getting an analyzer in Unalakleet and ordering one for Savoonga so we can have analyzers in both villages. That way patient in Unalakleet and Savoonga can get tested and treated the same day. We are looking and hoping to get analyzers in all the other villages as well.

- **If someone has an emergency tooth problem and they test positive and you know you got to do something there to relieve the pain. There's a possibility there could be two emergency's. One is the emergency tooth situation and two is testing positive at the same time and the patient is in a world of hurt. Something to think about.**
  - We do have methods of treating patients who are COVID-19 positive. We are hoping to keep the virus in check. If someone has an emergency dental situation and they are positive for COVID-19 the dentist will make the call on the treatment. We have heap filter that can be placed in a dental exam office that can make the room like a negative pressure rooms. We also have negative pressure rooms in the facilities for dental to happen if needed. We are planning for potential that a dental patient is positive. Keep in mind that all practitioners have to wear PPE to keep them protected. But if there is an emergency and their positive that is the dentist call but it's my understand that they would wear full PPE and do it in a safe fashion as possible and there would be no issues there.
- **On Mandatory staff, what if a staff person doesn't want to get tested? Is there a way for the patient to see that the staff was tested for example a color indicator for the patient and staff to know that they were both tested and are negative.**
  - We don't foresee any employees refusing COVID-19 testing. But as you mentioned Norton Sound has internal policies to deal with that situation. We could certainly as a corporation that we can make a decision that everyone would need to be tested before seeing patients. We want everyone in the region to feel comfortable that if they come here and see a provider or any of the clinic that they are being seeing people that are negative for COVID. We don't see people refusing it.
- **OA: Is Diomedea going to have a June visit with a service provider?**
  - Yes eye care is on the list for June 1<sup>st</sup>. They are on the schedule.
- **OA: In June we should have the new clinic project workers out there and they don't have a lot of space or hotel's or anything for people to come in and the clinic is very small. The old clinic that the provider is staying at is really small and is only suitable for one person at least. Do know the school is shut down and usually they take people in and have them rent from the school but have not received an answer back from principle Mike and not**

**sure how that will go. June will be a terrible time to travel in for Diomed.**

- Dr. Peterson will pass the information on to the manager of that department and appreciate that input.
- **On the media there is talk about opening up travel and services and do not want people to feel pressure to open up their communities and to use caution.**
- **Don't know how the spring thaw will be in Wales but every spring time or when there is a lot of rain the run way gets too soft for planes to come in and don't know when a good time would be for Wales.**
  - Listed for Wales is Audiology the week of May 18<sup>th</sup>, Rehab the week of May 25<sup>th</sup>. I guess if the flights are going it is okay to go. I guess if it is not safe for the plane to land there the flight will be canceled and we would have to reschedule.
- **OA: With thought of having dental team coming to work with community and thought on closing passenger run from main line to Diomed for two weeks and just having dental come out to work with our people maybe sending tests for the dental patients that want to be seen which is most of Diomed which is about 100 people but not all 100 people will be seen so maybe 50 or 60 people seen. Having tests for them so that they can take the test before the dentist sees them. From here I think it's doable because we are having more people want to fly out of Diomed for dental. There are a lot of children that need to be seen. What are your thoughts on this?**
  - Right now the new normal for dental is a little tricky because the procedures are higher risk. Testing a head of time is certainly a possibility. We will talk with the dental department on what the possibilities are and we know that bringing select to Nome is a relatively safe thing to do and we can get them tested quickly and get them seen quickly. Certainly any emergency situation or urgent situations where there is pain or infection that kind of thing we can get them seen. When dental resumes dental travel and village visits it may have to look a little different depending on what procedures are to be done. We will bring the concern to the dental department and will do the best we can to get those patients that need to be seen, seen. Every village will have to be a little patient with resuming full dental services.
- **Which services are scheduled for Golovin?**
  - Eye Care listed for May 18<sup>th</sup>, and Rehab listed for the week of June 1<sup>st</sup>.
- **OA: Spoke with Deborah Petteway, PA and they bring the essential air travel services permit to her for the outgoing passengers. The question is the hospital patients that are going in for dental are they staying at the hostel and after they are done with their appointment and there for a couple of weeks at the hostel and back to Diomed is that correct?**
  - That is correct.
- **There is one patient that refuses to stay at the hostel. That is a situation we are coming into. We do know that if she fly's in to Nome and she wants to stay with family. To us that's us not know if she is doing the 14 day quarantine.**
  - Understood. We work with people on this end to get them in

quarantine. We will have to work on case by case basis and as soon as we can bring service to the village that is the best way to do it so you all don't have to travel. We are working on it. Any emergent patient should come in. Do understand the issue with quarantine.

- **Who is coming to Stebbins? We would like tribal healers and eye clinic.**
  - Stebbins is not on the list. We do have a new PA Mark Roman. He will live in Saint Michael until Stebbins housing is ready. Dr. Peterson will check for the schedule.
- **Any update for Saint Michael?**
  - As of May we don't have anyone traveling out to Saint Michael. I'm sure for June and beyond we will.
- **What are you advising on the travel ban?**
  - Right now every village has their own travel ban and basically no one is allowed in unless they have permission, limiting travel which is a good thing. Norton Sound stance is that we would request and support the villages to continue the travel ban for another 90 days through the month May, June, and July. Our feeling is that our villages would be best served continuing their travel bans through the summer. We are happy to meet with your individual tribal committees to talk about this to answer questions. Ultimately it is your decision on this were just letting you know from our point of views that travel bans are a good thing, been effective, work, and want to keep things that way and if the villages can extended their ban for another 90 days we think that would be appropriate.
- **Have posters been sent out to the village and we read posters and have not seen any in Stebbins that reads there is testing.**
  - Stebbins testing will start later this week or next week. That's a good poster's and we do have them for the villages and make sure they get up for you.
  - Saint Michael has done a lot of testing and if you have time and can make it over you can get testing in Saint Michael.
- **MAS: Know the need for the sign and have ordered signs and was wondering if we know when they are coming?**
  - Do not have exact date but the order has been received by the company and the turnaround time should be quick. Norton Sound ordered 26 billboards and will be good size signs with post and ordered plenty of them. The ideal is to have two signs in the bigger villages and at least 1 minimum in the smaller villages and some here in Nome and can order more if needed.
- **Bering Air gave an update of their flight schedule which has pretty much resumed their twice a day service to most villages. We are mostly back to our pre-COVID schedules. Our passenger's numbers are still very low but this was to help provide more freight and mail capacity. Same schedule but not going to Kotzebue and are requiring all passengers to have travel authorizations to the village they are going to. If anyone would like a copy of the updated schedule can email [nina@beringair.com](mailto:nina@beringair.com) and can forward it over.**



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Does Bering Air provide masks?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bering Air has some mask and whatever they do have they will give to people that do not have one. We are still asking passengers to fly with a mask or some types of face covering that do not have a mask.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>The recommendation for keeping travel bans until August 1<sup>st</sup>, will there be any concertation to changing that date an earlier date with the possibility of active cases in Alaska reaches 0 and no new cases coming on or anything?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to take into account all the new information that comes in.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>MAS: The senate did start up this week in Washington DC and the house is still shut down. Active to our law maker is there and we can continue to send emails and call so know that with the pandemic in consideration in how the nation will deal with it still very urgent among law makers and really want to encourage for you to find someone in your community if not yourself to share stores about water and sewer. Our way of life is so unique in our region that sharing how we leave and sharing what issues we got is always new to people. Are hope is that we can compile those stores that reflect your voices, your communities, your families, our region, our effort for water and sewer. It will help us make an impact. We are blessed with a really strong delegation and with Senator Sullivan, Senator Murkowski, and Congressman Young and it's a tough environment in DC and we want to empower them with our reality so that they can help address the need for it to be done. If I could make a plus for video we would like them by May 8<sup>th</sup> please email to Reba and if you have questions on the kind of videos or myself. I know that Laurli Ivanoff is also on our team to help with storytelling and if you prefer that it, it might be easier to have someone to talk through how to tell stores we are bless with the resource.</b></li> </ul>
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