

**COVID-19 Tribal Leadership Session Minutes
May 26, 2020**

Angie Gorn, CEO, NSHC	Reba Lean, NSHC	Mark Peterson, MD, Medical Director, NSHC
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Kristen Timbers, NSHC	Carol Charles, NSHC	Megan Alvanna-Stimpfle
Opik Ahkinga, Diomedede	Jason Harrell, NSHC	Rhonda Burnett, NSHC
Tiffany Martinson, Nome Eskimo Community	John Waghiyi, Savoonga	Irene Navarro, Native Village of Golovin
Charlie Brown, White Mountain	Paul Kosto, LEPC	Marie Katcheak, Stebbins
Carol Oliver, Golovin	Jolene, Unalakleet	Emma Pate, NSHC
Roy Ashenfelter, Kawerak	Toby, Golovin	Carol Charles, NSHC

*Over 50 participants attended today's meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION
Introduction to Meeting – Angie Gorn, NSHC CEO	<p>Angie gave an introduction regarding facility activity over the past five days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Norton Sound Health Corporation confirmed a 3rd positive case of COVID-19 in Nome on Friday May 22nd - That was just one day after the 2nd case was announced on Thursday May 21st - NSHC initiated a mandatory COVID-19 testing policy on Monday May 18th - Prior to the implementation of the mandatory testing employees were being tested on a voluntary basis up until that point - Both new cases are Norton Sound Health Corporation Employees - They are Nome community members - They are not traveling or itinerant staff - On Friday May 22nd NSHC chose to close to the public and that really gave us time to just pause; We felt that though time was really needed to allow us to conduct comprehensive testing for all Nome base staff and provided a 4 day weekend for all high touched surfaces to be cleaned very thoroughly - If you were reading any post from the media, you would have seen that they portrayed that as a shutdown and made it sound worse than it actually was - Again we just closed because we felt those 4 days were needed - Public Health nurses were notified immediately with both new cases, contact investigations were completed - Today, Tuesday May 27th, almost all Nome based staff have been tested and are back to work if results were negative and if there were no requirement to quarantine as a close contact - Norton Sound Health Corporation will continue to conduct this mandatory testing every 14 days for our employees with the exception of QCC - QCC we are testing every 7 days - We just want to be extremely cautious on the nursing home end - As a reminder Norton Sound is very cautious with any of our employees that have traveled out of our region - Quarantine restrictions are still in place before returning to work for any staff that has traveled <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Blessing 2) Medical Staff Briefing 3) Community Assessment and Cleaning Supplies 4) Comments and Questions

	<p>Note- Any questions may be sent to Reba Lean at rlean@nshcorp.org anytime or text to 907-434-1927 and they will be answered during the 11:00 am call.</p>
<p>Prayer</p>	<p>Prayer was given</p>
<p>Medical Staff Briefing – Dr. Mark Peterson, NSHC Medical Director</p>	<p>Dr. Peterson gave medical staff update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alaska: There was a long weekend and have four days. The summary is this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On May 22nd there were two cases in the state; One was in Nome, one was in Juneau • On May 23rd there were four cases in the state; Two were in Wasilla, one was in Nome, and one was in Kotzebue • On May 24th there were zero cases in the state • On May 25th there was one case in the state; One case in Kenai • 409 cumulative cases in the state • 361 recovered • 38 active cases in the state remain; Again that number still stays low and we like to see that • There are nonresidents that do not figure in to these totals; There has been a total of 16 nonresidents since the beginning of keeping track that have been positive in the state; two recently that were positive were fishery workers; A lot of these lower 48 fishery workers coming are turning positive but do not know how many are coming up; There is certainly one every day or that is popping up positive so thankfully they are catching them and quarantining them - ANMC: 1 inpatient, 19 outpatients with COVID-19 - NSHC: Have tested 1,893 different individuals which represents almost 19% of our whole region and we have done over 3,000 total test - Details of cases that is shareable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We decided that we would start doing mandatory testing • We were already doing voluntary testing, testing a lot of employees and everybody was negative • We started a mandatory testing of all employee and during the first couple of days during that mandatory testing we had two individuals pop up as positive • They allowed us to give the report that they are Nome based, community members, that do not travel • We talked with state epidemiology about the cases and we decided that, to be on the safe side that we would just test every Norton Sound employee that works in Nome • We would test them all to make sure there was no spread going on of the virus • Over the long weekend we have tested 431 employees • The lab and nursing has done a ton of work and we are really appreciative of all the work that everyone has done • That is 431 out of 498 employees, which is just about all of them • The rest of them are being taken care of today and really about 25 that

remain today; all the others are not in the region, have not been around, they are on leave, their on vacation, they're gone so they are not at risk of having this anyways because they have not been here

- All of the employees that have been in the region have been tested and negative and there's 25 getting tested today
- After we looked at this we talked with state epidemiology and there are really no association between the two employees within the hospital; they don't work in the same area, their far apart and they have no connection outside
- This appears to be community spread of the virus
- We know the virus is here because we had a first case in early April
- We have not had one for a while
- We are testing more, and we are going to find cases
- We found these two and we are confident that these two are from the community, small community spread of the virus that we have
- The appropriate people are in isolation, the contacts are in isolation, nobody has traveled to the villages from these contacts, and everything is contained here in Nome
- We have tested the employees
- We have done the cleaning
- We are back to business as usual this week
- We did have a couple of providers that were traveling to the villages this week to provide care like audiology, optometry, rehab and that kind of thing but we are going to wait a week
- We decided last week when this happened that we would just wait this week and just not have village travel happen for those individuals until the following week; Just because we wanted to wait and see and get the testing done
- Now we have all the testing done and it all looks really good which we are thankful for
- If you tested enough in your community you are going to find more cases
- Like in Kotzebue they are testing more and they caught another one over the weekend
- We know that the virus is up in our region
- There is almost 1.7 million people in the US that are known to have the virus and could probably estimate a lot more than that, that probably has it
- We know it's here
- We are going to continue to test aggressively
- We are going to have special weeks where communities are more at risk; grocery workers, cab drivers, other clerks that work with patients, police, EMS, firefighters
- Will work with Reba on that to have certain days for certain departments

- If you have friends, loved ones, other people that you know work with the public, encourage them to get in and get tested in the tent
- We didn't want to see additional cases but when we catch these and early like this, it's a good feeling to catch them early
- Another thing we feel good about is the state epidemiology was very impressed with all the procedures we have in place
- Everybody got a mask on, everybody social distancing, everybody is doing a good job at that, and it has made the work for Public Health state epidemiology a lot easier and in making sure any contacts get isolated
- There aren't as many contacts when you are wearing masks, and there aren't many people at risk
- We have more people coming up from the airplane and we are testing at the airport now
- We are going to push that hard and we are going to find more cases and we expect too
- Norton Sound does not feel that this changes anything for our region
- Optometry, Audiology, and Rehab Therapy can go back to doing village travel next week
- We will test everybody 48 hours before going out
- We are doing the same quarantine for our staff and doing testing of all of our staff
- We are going to continue doing what we are doing and slowly opening back up
- We feel that primary care clinic in the hospital can open back up to patients as we have been planning
- We do not see a change there
- As far as individual village travel bans, be careful and cautious about opening back up; 14 day quarantine is the best and still feel that way
- Will meet with Savoonga later this week
- Same message to everybody 14 day quarantine is the best
- If you really want to limit virus into your village go with a 14 day quarantine
- If you want to look at something shorter, 7 to 10 days of quarantine with testing on both ends is an option that you can do well
- It's a little more difficult to do in the village because when you test the second time on the end you still have to wait 2-3 days
- For now through the summer and into the fall until we see where things are at think the quarantine should stay in place
- Hopeful that the quarantine in Nome for the intrastate, travel within the state to Nome, were hopeful that it stays at either option; 14 days or 7 days with testing at both ends
- We know that it's kept things down for us and we know if we open up travel from the lower 48 or within Alaska into Nome, wide open, the virus is here, more people will bring it and spread the virus and we

	<p>know quarantine and testing is important</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are going to have a presence at the airport and testing aggressively as we can <p>Travel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For someone traveling into Nome, if they are traveling from any other part of Alaska travelers can now choose to stick with a 14 day quarantine or there is an option available where they could test on the day of arrive, be in quarantine for 7 days and test again on day 7 and if both test have been negative they have completed their quarantine
<p>Community Assessments – Sean Lee, Sanitation Construction Project Manager</p>	<p>Sean gave an update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Received all the assessments in a timely manner and wants to thank all of the communities - It helps figure out what the need is in the communities - Our major order for the cleaning supplies (detergent, hand soap, hand sanitizer, basic supplies) was placed well over a month ago - The supplies line are low and slow across the nation and is not just specific to our region and what is meant by that is that we received very few of the supplies we ordered and not even enough to ship out to one single community - The goal is, we expect these items to be trickling in the next week or two - As we get the supplies we are going to start sending them out immediately and probably same day - The goal is that we don't hoard the supplies - When we do prepare shipment we will notify the community so that they point of contact will be ready and know to expect it - One thing that we have received is the spigot for the buckets for hand washing and we are still waiting for the buckets and those should be here anytime and understanding is that we will be sending out the spigot in one box and then the buckets will come and someone in the community will have to assemble them but it shouldn't be very difficult - Remind that these supplies are for household use and not business use - If you have a community with businesses looking for supplies we suggest you reach out to Anchorage vendor via phone and making an order that way - Most of the vendors are willing to ship large amount to the villages if they have the items in stock if not they can get them on order for you - One thing we are going to be sending out are cases of disposable nitrile gloves to all communities this for public safety employees to use like the post office, state office, tribal office, stores or other entities that interact with the public for safety - There is only enough to send a few cases to each community and each case has around 20 boxes in them - It will be up to the community leadership how to distribute it in each community - We will be getting in touch with your point of contact and sending those out here this week - Some of the supplies that were order include hand soap in the pump style, disinfecting wipes, laundry detergent, trash bags, buckets, household reusable rubber gloves(one or two pairs per home), already sent out cloth masks, pine sol, spill bottles

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is for all tribes not just the villages <p>Megan stated the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We are getting supplies out as quickly as we can - Hopefully some of the communities have received the cloth masks by now - If you are looking to purchase cleaning supplies for a business or for other reasons we have found out that if you contact those vendors you can do a phone purchase
<p>Survey</p>	<p>Megan announced the following winners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Last weekend announced that we would be announcing three winners today - A winner for Friday, Monday, and Tuesday - Bill Herzner, Nome - Cory Kralovetz, Brevig - Daniel Harbor, Nome
<p>Question and Comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The two cases that showed up, do we know if they asymptomatic or symptomatic? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. P: We have to be careful with how much we share. I will say this. We have no people in the hospital with COVID-19; we don't expect to have anyone in the hospital with COVID-19. We are happy with having to catch these early. If you can interrupt that, I can share that much information. That is the best I can share about that situation. o Was this the first test on the two individuals? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. P: That is information I cannot share. I can say this and you can make your interruption from my response. We just started our mandatory employee testing the Monday prior to these two cases showing up. Part of that has been voluntary. We have had quite a few employees show up but not everyone. Just on Monday was the required mandatory testing. o Have you isolated the areas of your facility that you need to; probably make sure that any spread has occurred more than these two cases? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. P: The answer is yes. What we've done is we've tested all the individuals that we feel are higher risk because of where they work in the facility and we are going to continue testing them a little more aggressively than the rest every couple of days for a few times. Plus we have done a deep clean, it's really a standard clean but we have really got those high touch areas. The other thing that we are doing is, we are going to get even more aggressive with the Plexiglas, our coverage between staff and our patients. We have done kind of everything to litigate any potential spread. Will say that this virus primarily spreads human to human. Not as much by touch. In fact we are finding out that it spreads much less by touch objects. I know it's sits on objects for a long time but that doesn't necessary mean that you are going to catch it from that cardboard or top that you touch. Just because it's residing there doesn't mean you are going to catch it. It's really primary human to human spread. So the fact that we have 431 additional employees that have been tested and are negative that's the stronger indicator to us that it's not likely to spread beyond these two. o Your theory is that these individuals contracted the virus from somewhere

in town?

- Dr. P: Well here is what we know. We know the virus is in Kotzebue, we know the virus is in Nome because we have somebody else with it. We test every single patient that we admit to the hospital. We have done that for a long time now. We have not had any patients with it in the hospital. We monitor temps of everyone coming in. We have the cough and cold clinic and have tested everybody. We have tested 18% of the population so we know where it is, is in the Nome community. We know that's where it's been because we have had another person test positive so we feel confident that it's most likely the individuals are contracting it somewhere in the community. That's why we need to continue testing more and more folks and getting those people at higher risk to get tested. Grocery store clerks, cab drivers, EMS, police officers etc. We won't know for certain in our cases, sometimes they are really straight forward but these are not. Just not a common thread other than the fact that all of these people have resided in Nome, in the community. That's kind of the common thread that we have.

- **Are you allowing the employees to travel again this week or is that still on hold?**

- Dr. P: Our policies for travel have not changed for employees. We had some providers that were going to be traveling to some of the villages this week. That's audiology, optometry, and rehab. We're going to take a pause of that this week and pick up with that again next week. Simply because we wanted to wait until the employee testing got done, have village calls to go on, and expect them to be back to business next week again with testing a head of time and all of that. Again all of them were tested and will get tested again next week before travel. Our midlevels that travel to the villages have to do 14 day quarantine in Nome and they have to test. They will continue to do that. That's a safe thing for them to do. 14 day quarantine and testing and then travel to the villages. That is about as safe as we can be. We are discouraging our staff from traveling anywhere for leave or pleasure or vacation or anything like that outside the region.

- **What would your recommendation be for the general public that wants to travel to the villages from Nome to visit within the State of Alaska?**

- Dr. P: It would be what the City of Nome currently does. The City of Nome currently requires those coming from within the state of Alaska to do one of two options. 1) 14 day quarantine or 2) 7 day quarantine with testing on both ends. That is what I would recommend for any of the villages. 14 day quarantine would be best and 7 day quarantine with testing on day 1 and testing day 7 and in the villages you have to stay in quarantine until that 7 day test comes back in 2-3 days. That would be the recommendation. Same as the recommendation we made to the City of Nome.

- **Those cases that are not reported as Alaska cases, are those essential workers that are traveling in?**

- Dr. P: The cases that are reported sort of separately are people who are

like fishery industry workers who come up in the seafood factories like Kenai and Valdez. That's who these people are. We wouldn't have any of those in our region. Our employees are all full time employees whether their home base is Nome or their home base is out of Alaska. They are considered part of the number when the state produces their numbers. These people are people that are coming up for fisheries to Cordova for example for a couple of months and come up with a seafood company from outside. They come up; they go into quarantine for a couple of days and get tested. Those are the ones that are popping up positive and there have been a total of 16 of those since we started counting. That's who those people are and they do not count in to the Alaska total.

- **There's people that travel to get their treatments done in Anchorage for cancer and other treatment and they are traveling every two weeks. Is there a reason why they need to come back home or can they be quarantined in Anchorage or Nome to prevent the spread from coming to the village because since they opened up some gaming activities they are coming back from Anchorage and Nome and they feel free that they should be able to participating in the gaming activities like anyone else even though we have a 14 day quarantine for those that have traveled from that area.**
 - Dr. P: There's no right answer to that. I guess what I would say is that each individual village would have to make their own decisions on their residents that have to travel for medical. If the village feels strongly that because the frequency of travel that they should quarantine elsewhere than the village can make that decision.
 - MM: ANMC has told us that for any patients that are traveling back more frequently they are willing to have them stay in housing in Anchorage for that time period rather than travel back and forth if the patient is okay with that. That is an option for patients and patients can talk to their case manager or provider if that might be easier for them rather than traveling back and forth and having to be in quarantine when they get back home.
 - Dr. P: If they are comfortable with quarantine elsewhere we can assist and try and help with getting those arrangements made. If that is staying in Anchorage for a period of time, staying in Nome for a period of time. It makes most sense if you are going to Anchorage a lot to stay there. ANMC will assist with that and we need to be aware and help coordinate that with ANMC.
 - AH: Is aware of several patients who have taken advantage of staying in Anchorage so they don't have to travel back and forth. We have also offered for that option here in Nome and have had some take us up on it and some not.
- **Are you going to prioritize the list of supplies for communities without running water first or how will you prioritize?**
 - It depends on the supplies, such as buckets with spigots. Other things like mask, they are prioritizing to everyone.
- **Have we begun doing antibody testing?**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NSHC does have it available. An announcement will be forth coming. We don't have broad testing strategy for this. ▪ The test has been shown to good when there is a lot of community spread, like 20% of population has it. The problem with the test is that corona viruses are pretty common. The test is not great at detecting the different corona virus unless we have a high number percentage of populations that has it. When it gives you a negative or positive, it does not let us know whether you have COVID-19 or any other of the corona viruses' type. ○ If someone is going from Nome to Golovin, with they still need to be isolated or quarantine? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will need to check with community travel restriction. ○ Discussion was held on quarantining in the surrounding communities. ○ What are they going to offer villages that don't have quarantine or isolation housing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We have the BSSD and we have the options to bring people to Nome if we need to. ○ What's the lead time now to set up the Abbott ID now test in the village and to possibly make it mobile and take it to each village for a couple days at a time to get as many people tested as possible? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. P: The way we have the testing set up in the villages we use the swabs from ANMC. ANMC N2000 is really sensitive and specific and rated a little better than the Abbott ID now and we are set up to test and send to ANMC. We have done around 12% of the village populations and wouldn't mind doing a second round. We would want to test one person from each household. We just don't want the same people to be testing again. There is support in the village and can target 18% instead of 12% of the village. It is reassuring that we have tested 12% in the villages. Will get with village teams to discuss another round of testing. If there was an outbreak in a village we would bring the analyzer out with response team and test wisely.
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