

**COVID-19 Tribal Leadership Session Minutes  
June 09, 2020**

Angie Gorn, CEO, NSHC	Reba Lean, NSHC	Mark Peterson, MD, Medical Director, NSHC
Kelly Bogart, NSHC	Megan MacKiernan, NSHC	Cameron Piscoya, NSHC
Kristen Timbers, NSHC	Carol Charles, NSHC	Megan Alvanna-Stimpfle
Joanne Keyes, Native Village of Wales	Axel Jackson, Native Village of Shaktoolik	City of Unalakleet
Nelson, BSNC	Mary David, Kawerak	John Waghiyi, Native Village of Savoonga
John Bioff, Kawerak	Annie Weyiouanna, Shishmaref Native Corporation	Deborah, Wales

\*Over 40 participants attended today's meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION
Introduction to Meeting – Angie Gorn, NSHC CEO	<p><b>Reminder to keep phone's muted.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Blessing</li> <li>2) Medical Staff Briefing</li> <li>3) Changes with Governors mandate for travel</li> <li>4) Comments and Questions</li> </ol> <p>Note- Any questions may be sent 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.</p>
Prayer	Prayer was given
Medical Staff Briefing – Dr. Mark Peterson, NSHC Medical Director	<p><b>Dr. Peterson gave medical staff update on the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Alaska:</b> 11 new cases, 573 total cases, 389 recovered, 1 nee death for a total of 11 deaths, 173 active cases, 12 people in hospital that are COVID positive and/or persons under investigation, Providence Care is up to 41 positive cases between patients and staff</li> <li>• <b>ANMC:</b> 0 inpatient, 37 total outpatients, 9 employees have tested positive since they beginning testing</li> <li>• <b>NSHC:</b> 5,770 tests have been conducted, 2,553 people have been tested, 4,495 negative, 1,271 pending, 4 positive, 3 recovered, 1 active</li> <li>• Everything that we are doing, the fact that we were able to get several month's into this pandemic and get testing in place, get education in place, doing social distancing, doing quarantine when needing to has really had an effect on every single case that we have had meaning it's had a very positive effect on every positive case we have had</li> <li>• Just want to emphasize continuing to wear masks, do social distancing, continue to test at the airport, continuing to do the quarantine</li> <li>• It would be ideal to keep the 7 day quarantine in place</li> <li>• There are 7 million cases of COVID-19 in the world, there are 2 million in the United States, the fact that we only have four that we know of so far in our region is very fortunate, the fact that those have been delayed until now is great because we have been able to get a lot of things in place</li> <li>• If we can keep 7 day quarantine for intra state and inter state travel coming into Nome and testing on day one and day seven is an outstanding way of screening</li> </ul>

	<p>everybody coming into the region who's been outside the region, it's an outstanding way to keep people in quarantine from exposing to others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If we all as a community continue our social distancing, masking, keeping your social circle very small, all of this helps tremendously so that when a new case comes along we feel good about any case that comes along because of the things we have been doing</li> <li>• As the state opens up we are going to see more cases, we just are</li> <li>• Catching things at the airport is a good way to do that</li> <li>• NSHC is going to look at our global testing strategy right now and we are going to improve upon that and put a plan in place, to add staff, to get analyzers out to the villages, to get more analyzers, because we know the way to come at this is what we are doing now which is testing, point of care testing, rapid testing and to have it available</li> <li>• We are all doing a good job now but we are going to expand this and make it more robust</li> <li>• The state is doing a good job at the airport in Anchorage as well</li> <li>• We can do more and need time and we will get even more in place and generally feel good where things are at</li> </ul>
<p>Updates</p>	<p><b>Angie gave the following update:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Norton Sound did announce late last evening after 9:00 pm that we did identify our fourth confirmed positive patient with COVID-19</li> <li>- We will continue to release statements through press releases when we do have positives</li> <li>- We announced last evening that the patient is a Nome community member</li> <li>- We also have been asked by the media as an employer if this individual is an employee and the answer is no they are not an employee</li> <li>- Late last evening the patient was contacted and the patient is safely isolated so that is what we can share with you today</li> </ul> <p><b>Angie summarized a couple of follow ups:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today we will work on putting something together that can be issued with travel papers for patients who are traveling whether it is from the village to Nome or to Anchorage</li> <li>- We will work on influencing testing at the airport on the Anchorage end with some type of personal connected to Norton Sound to try to encourage more people to test and to expedite the registration process</li> <li>- Were also going to follow up with State Epi and try to have a coordinated call during this tribal call where we can ask questions and get a presentation from them</li> </ul>
<p>Survey</p>	<p><b>Megan announced the winner for the survey:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For the survey we are up to 660 people who have responded either by paper or texting in</li> <li>- Every name is left in the pot for the big drawing at the end</li> <li>- Our winner today is Mary Davis</li> </ul>
<p>Question and Comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Do you know if this person has traveled recently to Anchorage? Is it travel related or community spread?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is considered travel related and not community spread.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- **Do you know where they had gotten the virus?**
  - The state may give more information on routing. It's ultimately up to the State of Alaska to disclose that information.
- **What is the doubling time? You may have to get with ANTHC Epi or State Epi.**
  - ANTHC state doubling time is 90 days. The country is 30 days
  - How many days does it take to go, example, 500 to 1000. This was generally 90 days. However, with daily numbers go up, we are going to double our numbers sooner than 90 days.
- **Did you guys do numbers for Nome and how many cases there could be since the two at NSHC?**
  - Dr. P: We only have a total of four positive cases. We had one in April, the two employees, and the one yesterday. We have tested over 2,500 people +. We feel very confident about the numbers we have in this who region. We have tested a bunch of people. There might be some additional cases in the region that have not been tested but we don't feel that there are a lot of those. We feel pretty good about it. We have tested well over 10% of our region. We feel the increase numbers of cases are not in our region but they are in all these other regions where people are gathering and getting together. We just don't want to do what other regions are doing which is getting big cluster of cases. We want to keep gathering small if at all, keep your social circle small, you want to have a summer with fishing with your immediate family and keep your close contacts very limited.
- **Would this be considered an essential worker?**
  - Dr. P: Again we have to be careful with what information we share. I don't know if I could share that. I will say this and this will probably answer it. If people can wait and see the report this afternoon from the state all questions will be answered in that report I will tell you that.
- **What are the flight loads like coming from Anchorage with Alaska Airlines?**
  - Dr. P: It's getting busier and I believe there were 40-50 on the last couple of flights so they are getting busier. I believe we tested 26 people from the flight yesterday.
  - AG: There were 73 on yesterday's flight. We did hear from Alaska Airlines and they did say they are going to keep flights at once a day Monday through Friday at least until August.
- **Concern was brought up about people coming into our communities and are not taking it seriously when coming into Nome and feel that it may be out of town people coming in that are not getting tested or wearing masks when people from the region is doing much more. Wondering if more PR could be done.**
  - AG: Thank you for speaking to that. We have had some conversation this morning and heard that there is a little bit of a bottle neck when you get to Nome. We were looking at the process to see if Norton Sound could do anything differently to expedite that process of the wait time is less here in Nome for those who are choosing to be tested.

First of all our total since May 29<sup>th</sup> and there may be a few prior to that but we started keeping an actual airport log since May 29<sup>th</sup>, we've tested about 126 people through the airport testing process. So if you think about the number of flight and how many people may have been on a flight that isn't 50% of those people by any means. One ideal we had to help stream line the process here in Nome for testing and expedite it so there isn't a large wait time and also to encourage folks to think about testing we would like to add some type of influence at the Anchorage level. So we were thinking if Norton Sound had a hired employee who could meet with folks before they board that plane in Anchorage coming to Nome 1) They could pre-register so we could get all the information before they get on the flight and that would stream line things here in Nome and all they needed to do was get swabbed once they land in Nome. This individual could also hand out education and the importance of testing. Without having all the details I guess what I'm sharing is that we agree with you. More outreach can be done and something else can be done before folks fly to Nome to help expedite the process. We're working on it and hope we can report out on a change and something additional were doing this week.

- **If you head down to Anchorage do you have to do anything if you live within the state?**
  - Dr. P: No. Intrastate, travel within the state, the state does not have a mandate requiring quarantine or testing for people traveling within the state. Cities and villages have specific criteria but my understanding in the municipality of Anchorage apparently have some tighter regulations then the state but I don't believe traveling from Nome to Anchorage I think when you get to Anchorage I don't believe there is any requirement for quarantine or testing in Anchorage.
- **Is Norton Sound sending out messages to make sure all the villages are on the same page region wide about travel restrictions?**
  - Dr. P: For the villages, each village has their travel quarantine recommendations that have to be followed. If someone leaves the village and travels to Anchorage for any reason when they return to their village they have to know what the village requirements are because if you are going to travel from Anchorage back to the village you need to fill out a travel form to get to the City of Nome and if the village requires a form you are going to have to fill that form out. You can travel through Nome to the village but do have to do whatever quarantine requirements are for that village. Norton Sound does not determine what a person's quarantine plan is once returning from Anchorage. That's determined by the village. If a medical patient is coming back from Anchorage Norton Sound can assist if that person is going to need housing in Nome for any reason, they will assist with that. Norton Sound does not make the quarantine policy for those individual villages. Everybody has to know their individual village travel ban requirements and should be able to find those requirements locally.

- **Are Norton Sound employees still going to the villages?**
  - Dr. P: Our rehab department, which includes physical therapy, is doing some travel to the villages. You can call that department or call the clinic and see when they are scheduled to fly out.
  - AG: All other village trips are moving forward as scheduled. We didn't change anything related to village travel as a result of this confirmed case.
- **On the most recent positive case, was it detected after they came back from Anchorage and did a test when they came back?**
  - Dr. P: I can tell you that the test happened here at our facility on our Abbott ID Now rapid testing kit. That means that it happened in our community. If a person has been tested at ANMC or at the airport in Anchorage it would have gone to the state lab and the state would have reported things and we would have not have been actively involved but this was a test done in our hospital here, it was ran in our hospital here.
- **The detection of being positive was that because of symptoms started showing up or was it detected as a result of the test?**
  - Dr. P: Again there are certain things that we can say and can't say and I can't give more information in regards to that. What I can say is that all the things we've been able to put in place and do are all good things and we want to continue doing all the great things we have been able to do which is robust testing plan, the testing tent at the airport, have a coordinated plan with people coming in for travel, all of those things are important. The social distancing, quarantine, everything that everyone does is all really important. You just have to see what the state reports says. That's as much as we can share. We always wish we could share more details. It is really important that individuals have confidentiality.
- **MAS: Do you think we could ask state epidemiologist and also ANTHC epidemiology department to give an update and talk about the state of affairs in terms of where they see the virus going in Alaska, is the state doing enough in terms of testing and protection of Alaskan's, and what are issues they are learning and thinking about?**
  - Dr. P: I certainly would think that we could make this call an opportunity for questions and answers to epidemiologist; we would just have to get somebody from the state to agree to visit with us or someone from ANMC.
  - AG: I agree that is an excellent suggestion and we can reach out.
- **Are you guys going to plan to send more hand sanitizers or cleaning supplies to the communities with no running water? We received a batch in Shishmaref and it helped but was wondering if you would be sending more?**
  - MM: We have on order a ton of cleaning and hand sanitizer and just waiting for it to arrive and once it does we will be getting it out to the communities.
- **OA: When people travel in from the villages are they being tested right away in Nome?**
  - Dr. P: anybody that comes to the airport in Nome, if they want to get a

test at the airport tent they can do so. There is not a requirement that someone that comes in from the villages to Nome test at that location but they are certainly welcome to.

- MM: The testing tent is at the Alaska Airlines Airport and it is open 11am – 12 pm Monday through Friday and if someone comes in from the villages at a different time and they would like a test they can call and take patient driver right over to the hospital and get tested at the tent which is open Sunday through Friday.
- **Would it be possible for the hospital to, for the medical patients that travel, would it be possible to make a printout instructions on what to do when they leave the village and when they return to the village?**
  - AG: We can defiantly put that together today. We can work with a team of people and get something put together on paper and get it to our clinic travel clerks and folks here in Nome that are booking travel to get that together.
- **Do you know if the hospital has the testing cards available yet?**
  - AG: Yes we did design those, received them, have plenty of them, and believe that all the clinics have them as well but will follow up with them.
  - RL: Yes they were sent out to all the clinics.
- **Do you receive the card once you get the test or once you get the results?**
  - RL: They should be handed out upon the testing so that the provider can initial off on the date you were tested. I will send out a reminder to staff to keep handing them out.
- **If you got a positive, what are the chances that it could be a false positive?**
  - Dr. P: On the Abbott ID Now analyzer that we have or the analyzer at the state lab or the analyzer at ANMC. A positive result is almost 100% positive. The chances of it being falsely positive are extremely low. False negatives can happen. If somebody gets tested it should be positive but the test comes up negative there are a number of factors involved with that. When the Abbott ID Now first came out there was talk about false negatives they were coding rates of as high of like 30% for falsely negatives. Well that's not the case when it is done in a controlled environment and well trained staff. I'm guessing the chances of a false negative would be well under 30% and would be around 10-15%. As doctors and providers we are trained to treat the symptoms and not the test. If someone came in with classic symptoms of COVID-19 and have been traveling and had reason for exposure and the test was negative we would treat them as if they had it. The tests are not perfect tests. If they are positive we treat them as if they are positive because for the test being incorrect is very low.
- **It's kind of concerning to hear about people getting of the jet in Nome without covering their mouth and nose. Is anyone talking to anyone at Alaska Airlines or is Alaska Airlines involved in any of these teleconferences?**
  - Dr. P: I think it's a requirement on Alaska Airlines now is that everybody should be wearing masks. Now do you they take them off

when they are walking down the stairs? I suppose that's possible, they could be. If they go in the terminal and Alaska Airlines requires them to wear one then they need to. The latest flight I took everyone had a mask on in the airplane. I don't know the exact Alaska Airlines rules.

- GS: The Alaska Airlines requires you to wear a mask on their flights. However it's like anything else like Dr. Peterson stated when people get off the plane they want to strip the mask away to breath fresh air, sure, but really they should be putting it on when they get crowded again going through the terminal. I think that is just human nature but we can talk with Alaska Airlines if they would agree to be posting some posters to remind people to wear masks in their terminals. They can require but don't know if they will and I will reach out to Alaska Airlines.
  - AG: For the people that are testing we do have an educational kit and in the kit is a mask in case they have lost theirs. It has education in writing, it informs them once they have been tested what they need to do during the time the test comes back. We want to make sure we are testing folks and do not get the results immediately and if they test positive and they go to the store or have done anything we want to make sure they are wearing their mask. We want to make sure that education is taking place.
- **OA: Pilots that are flying back from Anchorage are they supposed to be quarantining before they fly the planes or helicopters to the villages?**
  - GS: They are considered emergency workers and we are encouraging anybody interacting with the local villages to make sure that they isolate themselves as much as possible. The term quarantine is typically used and don't have any interaction with the residents of the community but it is also up to the villages to say this is what we expect and helicopter or airplane comes in, I know Bering Air and Pathfinder are very sensitive about limiting their interaction with the communities when they come in.
- **Are people making any kids masks out there?**
  - MM: We don't recommend masks for any child two years of age or younger or who cannot remove the masks themselves. Over two can wear masks and there are some small masks are out there. It's important that anyone wearing a mask can remove them themselves.
- **Is plasma going to be available in the Anchorage or Nome area if there is a big outbreak?**
  - Dr. P: It will not be available in the Nome area. I can tell you it might be available in the Anchorage area. I can promise to research that a little more to the Anchorage area to see if anyone is working on that.