

**COVID-19 Tribal Leadership Session Minutes  
July 13, 2020**

Amy Hollis, 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
Charles Swanson, Native Village of Koyuk	Joanne Keyes, Wales	Ellen, Wales
Dorothy Barr, Native Village of White Mountain	Sherri Anderson	John Waghiyi

\*Over 30 participants attended today's meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION
Introduction to Meeting – Angie Gorn, NSHC CEO	<p><b>Today's Reminder:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please keep phone muted unless speaking or asking a question</li> </ul> <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>
Updates	<p><b>Angie gave the following update:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Our last call was last Thursday, and we did not have a call on Friday</li> <li>- We did have 6 cases since Thursday</li> <li>- Last Thursday evening after our teleconference, we shared that we found three positive COVID-19 cases overall found in one day and communicated in the same press release</li> <li>- Two of the COVID cases were close contacts, one was a resident of Nome, and the other one was a non-resident, and it is believed that those were travel related</li> <li>- The third case that we announced that patient did give us permission to share that their home community was Teller and that case was the second case that we have found in Teller</li> <li>- The following day we announced that we had a Norton Sound employee through routine testing that tested positive and we did communicate that</li> <li>- We are extremely confident that we found that case early and isolated that patient early</li> <li>- Just over the weekend here on Saturday we identified another COVID case and that patient allowed us to share that their community was Teller and we also communicated through the press release that there was a possible outbreak in the village of Teller</li> <li>- We have taken that very seriously; we have had several meetings with the leadership in Teller to address this</li> <li>- We have had testing going on in Teller and our goal is to test 100% of the community and we will do follow testing as well in 7 days</li> <li>- Last evening we identified another case that would be the 6<sup>th</sup> case since we talked on Thursday and we do not have permission to share what village the patient is from one of our regional villages and the leadership from that village is well aware and we have a plan between that village and Norton Sound Health Corporation and we will be working with the response team to also roll out robust community wide testing</li> </ul> <p><b>Reba on City Council Meeting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If people are unable to attend in person there is a call-in number to give public comments tonight</li> <li>- The meeting starts at 7pm and the call-in number is 443-6605</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comments will be limited to 3 minutes maximum</li> <li>- If you just want to watch and live here in Nome it should be airing on the GCI local channel</li> </ul> <p><b>Angie on City Meeting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I would like to go to the meeting in person and share that we have this daily teleconference since March and that it is the consciences of our participants that the Nome city council continue to keep the strong safety precautions and the quarantine requirements in place</li> <li>- Is there anyone on the call that would not like me to phrase it that way? (No one opposed)</li> <li>- I guess I would be speaking on behalf of our group here who have been working towards this to keep everybody safe just to reiterate that</li> </ul>
<p>Medical Staff Briefing – Dr. Mark Peterson, Medical Director</p>	<p><b>Dr. Peterson gave medical staff update on the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Alaska:</b> Everyone is aware that there has been several new cases and kind of on the rise and it’s looking like a lot of young people</li> <li>• <b>We know that a lot of these cases are related to gatherings that have happened in the state and a lot of them are related to fourth of July activities</b></li> <li>• For Sunday there was 116 total cases between residents and non-residents and that is the first time the state has topped 100 cases in a day</li> <li>• Every other state has had 100 cases or more per day at some point</li> <li>• It’s way up for us but it’s still less then a lot of state are showing</li> <li>• I looked at those cases briefly and 93 are residents and the rest are non-residents</li> <li>• Most cases are in Anchorage and Fairbanks with around 30 cases each and the rest are scattered around the state</li> <li>• It’s much higher and not going in the direction that we want, and Dr. Zink tweeted out about that we want to see this going in the other direction not this direction and encouraging masks and the works</li> <li>• The numbers are up and the day before (Saturday) was around 70 new cases</li> <li>• The total number in the state is 1,479</li> <li>• Active cases are 864 and that is a high number and a certain number has recovered</li> <li>• On the good side the number of hospitalizations is not really going up and at 27 and are down from the other day with no additional admissions and no deaths which is still at 17</li> <li>• There are no patients on a ventilator as of this morning in the state which is also a good sign</li> <li>• Two weeks from now we will have to see what that looks like since there is a two-week delay</li> <li>• Last week talked about bed availability, ventilator availability and that is what the state is watching very closely</li> <li>• The state there are still 86 intensive care unit beds available</li> <li>• There is a total of 644 beds available</li> <li>• There are 263 ventilators available in the state and no body with COVID-19 is currently on a ventilator</li> </ul>

- We are seeing numbers, but we are not seeing hospitalizations go up yet and we want to watch that closely
- 71 cases for last 24-hour period, the period that ends Monday at noon, 60 residents, 11 non-residents
- 1,539 cases total, 22 hospitalization, 27 hospitalization yesterday
- **ANMC:** 6 inpatients with COVID-19, 156 outpatient, 16 employees test positive
- **NSHC:** Here at Norton Sound we continue to test aggressively, and our number of tests continue up over 10,000 and that is a reason why we are finding more cases and why we have the number that we have
- On a good side we are not having a lot of community widespread
- We are not finding cluster of cases where multiple or even two people in a household are turning positive so that suggests to us that we are catching these cases early enough to put people in isolation or quarantine so that it doesn't spread which is the whole goal and have to stay up on that

**Dr. Peterson gave the following comments on the new cases:**

- We had the case in Teller which they gave us permission to let everyone know
- That person in Teller is in isolation and the family is in quarantine
- So that is three total cases in Teller; One over a month ago, and then two just recently
- There is no question that there is some virus floating around
- We know that people go back and forth between Teller and Nome
- We know the virus is in Nome and Teller
- We all need to be wearing masks, doing the social distancing
- We meet with Teller leadership and the message there in Teller is that if you are going to travel on the road system and come to Nome or if you are going to travel from Nome to Teller we want people to get tested and have a negative test before they are traveling
- One way that a virus can spread easily is in a confined vehicle for two hours without masks on and we know that is a way a virus could spread
- If you are going to travel between Nome and Teller for any reason than don't travel if it is not essential, we do not want people traveling and it is for essential travel only in the whole state and even though things have opened it is travel for essential only
- We did test 100 people in Teller over the weekend and have a few more to test this week
- For the Teller case it is testing, wearing masks, social distancing, not piling in cars with someone who is positive and traveling back and forth and want to avoid that situation
- The additional village case we had I would like to share that it's not Teller
- Again, that's an individual without any symptoms
- Really know understanding on how they came up positive
- That simply means we need to do testing and that is underway and we have meet with that village leadership and they are fully aware and we have a plan in place and testing is happening and we just need to test everybody and hopefully we don't find another case

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As were seeing these cases go up the state is requesting mask, hand washing, social distancing</li> <li>- With fourth of July the opposite happened, and people were not social distancing and we are seeing that</li> <li>- There is a City Council this evening and think this is an important one for people to attend to get the message out that truly now is not the time for us to not have people quarantine and this is actually the time we would really want to start a quarantine program if we didn't already have one</li> <li>- The quarantine has been an excellent additional way that we have been catching these cases and keeping them in check</li> <li>- Of all our cases multiple of them were caught during quarantine and spread was prevented because people were social distancing and wearing masks</li> <li>- We just must do more of the same</li> <li>- I encourage people this evening to attend the City Council meeting if you feel compelled to speak about the importance of continuing 7 days of quarantine with testing and think it is helpful for the council to hear from people because they will hear from people who would rather not have quarantine happen and Norton Sound feels strongly that we should have that</li> </ul>
<p>Question and Comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Why did we open our bars up?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dr. P: That is a very good question and I am not part of that decision making. The city would have to visit on that. Anchorage does have a list of bar's and restaurants to stay away from due to COVID spread. If anyone is going to be in one needs to make sure they socially distance, wear a mask, and wash their hands.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Concern was brought up about the bars being open.</b></li> <li>○ <b>If I was someone who thought I had COVID when can I go, get tested?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dr. P: If you are sick and if you have symptoms and concerned that you might have COVID19 you would call our clinic and our clinic would decide for you to come in and get tested Monday through Friday. On the weekends you would get tested in the ER. If you are not having symptoms but just want to get tested because you may have been in contact with somebody etc. and you live in Nome our testing tent is open Monday through Friday 8am – 5pm, it's closed when they are out at the airport when the jet comes in otherwise open 8am-5pm and is open Saturday and Sunday afternoon as well. If you are in the village all our village clinic's can-do testing between 8am – 5pm and would like a phone to call a head.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Concern was brought up about testing in the ER at the hospital in Nome. Dr. Peterson and Angie will investigate this concern and work with the staff.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Request to make the staff aware that if someone has symptoms and has been in contact with someone who tested positive COVID to make it emergent.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Dr. P:</b> If you do have symptoms please isolate yourself until the test is available. We will make it as radially available as possible. We can always get testing the very next day. You may be asked to test the next day but if you are ill and need to be seen you need to be seen. It is</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- important to get tested but it may not be emergent depending on what your symptoms are at that moment. Also want to mention that if you have any other cough, cold, or illness to really stay away from others.
- **MM:** A negative test when you have symptoms does not mean stop isolating. We still do encourage that if someone is sick and especially if they have been in contact with a positive that a negative test does not get you out of quarantine or isolation.
  - **Is there a way to close the Teller Highway?**
    - **Dr. P:** When we visited with the Teller leadership this weekend the comment that we made is that we know there is community spread in Nome, we know there is community spread now in Teller. We have no ideal if it's coming from Nome and going to Teller or vis versa or a combination. So that road is a two-way street and this situation is a two-way street so really, it's kind of both communities are involved with road travel. It is tough to shut down a road. There is some type of essential need that happens between the two communities so it would be difficult. Norton Sound certainly does not have jurisdiction with that, so our recommendation was to the leadership in Teller was to encourage to have people get a negative test before traveling so I think that is the message they are giving out.
  - **Comment was made that the Teller highway is a state highway and that if people want to try and close it down it would best if Teller contacted the state and asked what the process is.**
  - **With the new case, you mentioned that you are not sure where it came from and if it is travel related. Are you saying that it is community spread?**
    - **Dr. P:** It is an individual that has not traveled out of the region and they have not spent time with someone that traveled outside the region. That leaves us to wonder where got it. It makes one think that they got it from within the village so we will test the village and that is what we know at this point.
  - **You keep mentioning testing. We know with the virus it can take up to two weeks or longer. What's your thought behind that and what is Norton Sounds position on testing vs quarantining?**
    - **Dr. P:** We do bring that up on this call from time to time so that is why we meet regularly on this call. Quarantine is 14 days if you have been in contact with somebody that has COVID-19 you need to quarantine for 14 days. There is nothing that replaces that. That is what a person must do. Testing does not replace that. You do not have to test if you are in quarantine, you just must quarantine. Some people in quarantine like to test if they have been a close contact. They just want to know up front. Often close to their end of the quarantine they like to repeat to make sure they are still negative. You are correct quarantine for 14 days and that is what it is, and testing does not get you out of quarantine or change anything. When you go into quarantine testing is not so important. However, we know that a lot of testing is important, and people should be getting tested regularly and so we just test a lot of people and that is how we are catching people early on. It is a good

	<p>point that you can not test yourself out of quarantine and that education needs to happen about that.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>At what level within Norton Sound are you aware of communication between Norton Sound and YK?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Dr. P:</b> We meet every Monday at 2pm. All the tribal health organizations meet. We have open communication and if they have village issues to share with us and vis versa we would simply pick up the phone and make that happen. Communication is there and we meet weekly and think that if there were any issues between villages between YK and us, we would be sharing efforts on that.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Comment was made on how we need to be treating our region with respect if they contract the COVID virus.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Will our nose be affected by the COVID test?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Dr. P:</b> No affect to the nose.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Are some communities having quarantine done in Nome instead other than the villages?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Dr. P:</b> What we've done we have been communicating with all villages and encouraging them to have isolation and quarantine housing set up in the village. That's really the ideal situation is to have isolation housing, quarantine housing, in each village and many villages have that. If we must use that we use that. We try to keep a person in their own home if possible. To isolate or quarantine in their own home if possible. If it is not possible, we try to use the village isolation or quarantine housing. If that's not possible we do have housing in Nome that is limited but do have housing in Nome for people. We have done it in all three ways.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Is there a shortage on the rapid testing?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Dr. P:</b> We have rapid test available in our region, but it has its limitation. One operator must operate it and they have many steps to do it. You may only be able to do 30 tests in a day. We have enough swabs in general. If someone needs to have a test done and we can't do it on a rapid swab we will do the test and send it to the state lab.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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