

**COVID-19 Tribal Leadership Session Minutes
April 7, 2021**

Angie Gorn, NSHC	Reba Lean, NSHC	Mark Peterson, MD, Medical Director, NSHC
Kelly Bogart, NSHC	Megan MacKiernan, NSHC	Cameron Piscoya, NSHC
Kirsten Timbers, NSHC	Carol Charles, NSHC	Megan Alvanna-Stimpfle

*Over 30 participants attended today's meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION
Introduction to Meeting – Angie Gorn, NSHC CEO	<p>Today's Reminder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please keep phone muted unless speaking or asking a question <p>Note- Any questions may be sent to Public Relations at pr@nshcorp.org anytime or text to 907-434-1927 and they will be answered during the 11:00 am call.</p>
Updates	<p>Angie gave the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changed frequency of DTC to Mondays and Wednesdays. (NO calls on Tuesdays or Thursdays). We'd like to continue - Identified 2 cases since Monday. A Nome Resident & NSHC employee identified on Monday, and another one identified today, for a Nome resident also NSHC employee today. Total of 6 active cases.
Medical Staff Briefing – Dr. Mark Peterson, Medical Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monday's 84 cases in the state, Tuesday 217 cases in the state. - 6 cases in NSHC region active, all in Nome. We're seeing isolated cases in Nome, We're not having big community spread luckily due to vaccinations. Half of our region is vaccinated. We're seeing less spread. - NSHC has gotten 300 doses of J&J vaccine. We're making that available to all the villages in the fridge. When someone in the village wants their vaccine, it'll be available. We're working on getting J&J available at the airport, post office, and AC. We're working on that, and releasing when it is available at these locations. To not waste any doses, we'd like people in villages to be able to get at least 3 people in the vial. 54% of the ENTIRE region vaccinated. We're hoping to get that to 60% as soon as possible. - We're expecting 12yo+ vaccine to be available by June, and hope to reach herd immunity by end of summer and prior to the 2021-2022 school year. - The City of Nome has updated their travel mandate: If you're vaccinated, you're no longer required to test upon arrival in Nome. We'd like to advocate people to still test on day 7. All NSHC employees will still be required to test on Day 1 & 7. Please check with your village destination on their requirements.
Question and Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Caller, SHH: If someone is allergic to penicillin, morphine, & soy products, which vaccine do you suggest them to take? MP: Any of these vaccines (Pfizer, Moderna, & J&J) would be fine. You could advise to take the J&J might be easiest due to its single shot dose nature. There has not been any significant allergic reaction to J&J. We'll be having J&J in every village on hand. Any of them. Caller: What if a person has shingles? MP: If they have active shingles, it should be fine. - Jason Harrell: What's the latest on children's COVID vaccine. MP: We were told last week, that Pfizer would be submitting their data to FDA. We're expecting that to be 2-3 weeks, maybe end of April or early May to submit their data. We're hoping approval would be a couple weeks after submission, and available end of May, early June. Their preliminary results has been 100% effective for kids. There are other studies for younger children as well. - Caller: Do you know if village's have updated their travel mandates? Any drastic changes? MP: We haven't heard much from other communities. The Shaktolik leadership has advised for

anyone returning from the state basketball tournament to test. I've talked with tri-orgs, and they would like to continue testing until vaccination rates are higher.

- Toby: I read an article about testing for COVID variants? MP: They're discovering new variants pretty often. They're watching for these. They're making sure that testing equipment can identify new variants. We're getting a new machine that we hope that will be testing for new variants. The biggest thing is to get vaccinated. All the companies are staying ahead of this and will be developing boosters as needed.
- Caller: Did you find any info if NSHC will help with funds for COVID Coordinators? MP: NSHC doesn't have direct funds for a program like this. We expect more funds to be made available by the federal government. NSHC funds are most likely going to be put towards testing and vaccinations. Angie: The hospital has funds that have to be spent by June 30th. We're running on funds that came in the CARES Act that need to be used. We expect the next funds to be made available to tribes. There hasn't been another large sum to come in for pandemic mitigation initiatives. The current stage has been to work on vaccinating as many people as possible to get to herd immunity.
- Charlie, GLV: For the ones that have been infected and tested positive again, are they able to spread the infection to others? MP: if you've had COVID, and beyond 3 months, and you get infected again, we expect that it can be spread to others. If you have symptomatic COVID we'd treat you like you had COVID and have the patient isolate. If you've had COVID before, you're not likely to get COVID again within 6 months, but it is possible. Charlie: If someone had COVID and was sick, and recovered. Do they get tested again if they're still positive? MP: When you have COVID, you isolate for 10 days. Most people, unless severely ill and admitted, will recover in those 10 days. After you recover (NO longer shedding virus), you can still test positive for 3 months. After the 3 months are over, then you resume testing. We're advising people who've had COVID to still get vaccine. The antibody levels are higher after the vaccine rather than getting COVID infection. It is possible that some of our positive cases are people who've already recovered, but there's no way to know and they still need to isolate when the case is identified.
- Caller: If an individual has had COVID before, and can't test for 3 months, but need tests for Dental, how do you address that? MP: All of our providers and dental providers are aware that you don't test for COVID within 90 days of infection. If you've had COVID within 90 days, you don't test. You'd have to show them the public health letter and you are exempt from testing.
- Do any of the vaccines have boosters? MP: So far, no news regarding boosters. We expect them to be tested and released regarding new variants in the coming year or two but we don't know.
- Did any of the villages follow the Nome travel guidelines? MP: My understanding is that all individuals heading to village still need to test on day 1 and day 7. As soon as we learn that villages no longer require testing for vaccinated individuals, we'll release that. The only community we expect that to come through is maybe WMO due to their high rates. Caller: Is anyone opening things up? Jolene: I think our elder's lunch program is going to resume for in-

person in Unalakleet. MP: In order for that, we've advised UNK staff and elders to be vaccinated to safely participate in in-person lunch for elders.

- Berda: What's a good email to provide SHH guidelines to NSHC? pr@nshcorp.org
- Caller: Of the people who are vaccinated, have they turned up positive? In the state of Alaska, we've had a small handful of people who have tested positive, but they haven't gotten severely ill, nor passed it on to others around them.
- For people who've received J&J, are they able to put "vaccinated"? MP: I don't think that's necessary, most people know that J&J is only a single dose with the date. The J&J is fully effective after 2 weeks. Please take a photo of that and text it to me.
- Blanche: Has City of Nome listed their new travel mandates? Reba: They've posted on their FB. Blanche: the highway to Teller will be open soon, and it's needed for fuel. We'd like our mandates to be similar to Nome's for both Teller and Brevig. We'd like both our communities to get high vaccinations due to the road opening and travel between Nome, Teller, and Brevig. <https://www.nomealaska.org/community/page/covid-19-communications> MP: Please protect your community, and get vaccinated, and advise others that to open up, that we can vaccinate them when they're ready.
- When does the fishing derby end? Reba: Set to end, April 12th on Monday. Prizes: Every category winner (10 categories, measurement, photo submissions) will receive a \$50 gift card to Cabela's. We'll randomize all participants to a \$100 gift card to Big Ray's. We'll be offering coolers and bungee cords. Also each community will have a grand prize of an auger. We'll be sharing this later today.
- Lucy: At one point in the calls, there was a lady newly hired who has coordinated the senior care packages, is that still in process? Angie: The items that were purchased for the elder care packages was a long time ago. We've had issues with vendors that are taking a long time to get a lot of the items into Nome. We haven't sent the packages our yet, but waiting for a few other items. The package has a lot of nice items in it. We're waiting for all of it to arrive to box it up and ship it out.
- Amos: One of my biggest concerns is that for kids 12+, that if kids get COVID it can spread very easy to others in their age group. I'd suggest that kids are able to get the vaccine as soon as it's made available.
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