

COVID-19 Facebook live update: November 17, 2020

>> Pat: Good morning.

I am Pat Living with the department of health in social services and moderator for the COVID-19 opted for Tuesday, November 17th.

We're joined by the Yukon premier, the honourable Sandy Silver in the Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of health, Dr Brendan Hanley.

We're joined as usual by our sign language interpreter Mary Tiessen and Andre Bourcier from French language services directorate.

Allowing our speakers will go to the phone line for questions from reporters.

We will call you by name and you will each of two questions.

Before we begin with our speakers I would like to verify that everyone can hear us?

If any reporters are having a problem, please e-mail Alexis Miller.

Premier Silver?

>> Thank you, that.

Hello everybody and thank you for joining us here in the traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dün in the Taa'an Kwächän Council.

I am very pleased to be here again with Dr Hanley to provide an update on the government's response to COVID-19.



Last week, we announced another case here in the territory, bringing our total count to 24.

Dr Hanley has more to say about that in a moment.

The new case combined with the dramatic increase in cases in Nunavut and -- in the past week is a stark reminder that we are still in the grips of this pandemic and things can change very quickly.

Once again, I want to stress how important it is to practice the Safe Six.

This is still the best thing we can all do to keep our territory safe.

Washing your hands, maintaining physical distance, staying home if you're sick, travelling responsibly and respectfully, both with inside the territory and outside the territory, self isolate as required, and also follow gathering guidelines that are in place.

By practising the Safe Six, you can help keep all Yukoners safe.

You cannot let our guard down and we must remain vigilant.

In the past week, we laid two additional charges under the civil emergency measures act.

Both for failing to self isolate as required.

This is disappointing.

As I have said before, self isolating is not a suggestion, and it is not something you can choose to ignore if it is inconvenient.

The self isolating requirements are in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our territory.

It is for everyone.

If you fail to self isolate, you put your friends, your neighbours, your colleagues and fellow Yukoners at risk.

Canada's second wave of COVID-19 is reaching made territories and we need to make sure we are doing everything we can to protect our communities.

It is also important that we support our communities.

With a case of COVID-19 -- sorry, when a case of COVID-19 is detected in the territory, Dr Hanley and his team, together with the Yukon communicable disease control centre, put in an awful lot of hard work determining the level of public risk associated with the case.

They provide the public with the information needed to help mitigate the risk and to allow people to act in a way to minimize the spread of the disease.

They provide this information as quickly as they possibly can.

When this happens, it is not a time to shame people who have tested positive, and it is not a time to treat entire communities as though they are dangerous in need to be avoided.

I know it is difficult, and it was difficult, for example, with my community of Dawson when we were advised this summer to self monitor due to possible exposures.

And I know how difficult it has been for the good people of Watson Lake following the cluster of cases in that community just a few weeks ago.

But we cannot stigmatize Yukoners in a community.

We need to support them and we need to be kind.

We are all Yukoners and we are all in this together.

It is fine to ask people and encourage them to practice the Safe Six, but please do not do that in a disrespectful manner.

We still need to be strong and caring, together, because that is how we are going to get through this.

Being kind, respectful, and patient, those are essential qualities of Yukoners and when we are dealing with each other and also dealing with people in our work spacious, in public spaces throughout the territory.

One example as well as masks.

Masks are now required at the Canada games centre and at some places of business as well.

It is important to respect the requests of businesses and organizations to wear masks.

These policies are a precautionary measure that are meant to protect the health and safety of Yukoners.

No one wants to move backwards when it comes to restrictions or phases, and the best way to prevent this is by everybody doing their part.

It is also vital to be properly informed of what is happening in our territory and what we can do to individually keep Yukoners safe.

Rumours can spread more quickly than the disease, and they can cause unnecessary panic, distrust, and resentment.

So again, I encourage all Yukoners, please stay informed about COVID-19.

Accurate, up-to-date information about Yukon's current situation is always available at Yukon.ca.

This is where you're going to find out about active cases, and the risk if any to the public.

We will continue to share information as it becomes available and keep you informed about what is happening in the territory.

These weekly briefings are also an important source of accurate information, so I really do appreciate you altering -- tuning in for these updates.

Thank you very much for that.

There has been some encouraging news recently in terms of promising vaccine trials.

As many Yukoners are aware, the delivery of a vaccine is the final piece, so -- that we will need to put into fully ease the restrictions.

So like people all around the globe, we are anxiously anticipating an approval of a vaccine.

We want to assure Yukoners also that I am and regular conversations with my provincial colleagues, the premiers and other territories and provinces, and also the Prime Minister, discussing a coordinated national response to the pandemic.

We are working closely with our federal counterparts to prepare for the vaccine as well.



Plans for the territory are already underway.

And this includes identifying storage space, the number of required doses, staff requirements, and plans for distribution.

This is being informed-- this is being informed by this year's flu vaccine rollout as well.

During the first few weeks of the flu campaign, 10,830 Yukoners received their flu shot.

That is compared to 11,864 Yukoners for the complete year last year.

That is very impressive.

Thank you, Yukoners.

Big thank you to all those who have gone out and got in their flu shot already.

And a reminder to those that haven't got the shot the at, it is still available.

You can find information about where to get the flu shot at Yukon.ca as well.

Thank you everybody for listening to my part of the update.

Dr Hanley, to you.

>> Thank you, Mr premier.

And Bonjour, good morning.

I am going to cover many of the same topics that the premier just covered.



With a little more detail from a public health point of view.

Even for those of us immersed daily in things COVID, this has been an unusual week.

Cases surging around the country, our friends in Nunavut experiencing their own surge, Manitoba seeing hospital beds fill up, the United States hitting new records daily, in many European countries facing huge second waves.

From our viewpoint, it almost seems like we are in the eye of some huge, global COVID cyclone.

I certainly understand the stress and anxiety this is causing for us, especially as there is little news at the moment that is not COVID related.

Indeed, even while in the Yukon we are doing well, we are all deeply connected to this country as we face crisis levels of COVID in so many regions.

If you have been following the case count on Yukon.ca, you will have seen that our number has increased by one, as the premier said.

We announced our 24th case last week.

And like all others, this cases related to travel outside the territory.

In this case, even though the individual did everything right in terms of getting tested and self isolating, there were those potential exposures to the public just prior to symptom onset which led to the notifications that were posted at the end of last week.



Contact tracing is still being carried out with some testing of contacts, and it is possible we will see further cases associated with this case.

Those at the locations described in the public notification are asked to self monitor for symptoms and if you're feeling ill, even slightly under the weather, please arrange for testing and advise a testing centre that you were present at one of those locations.

In this case, the individual-- in case number 24, is doing well.

While this is our 24th Yukon case, we have an additional recent case in Yukon that will not be attributed to our case count.

This individual is someone from another part of Canada who tested positive up here.

They are so isolating and recovering well.

Contact tracing again has been carried out, with some testing of higher risk contacts and there are no identified case linked to this one.

This is an important reminder that Canadians who are not Yukon residents are not counted in our Yukon tell you, but rather in the tallies of their province or territory of origin.

We have had only occasional, even rare cases like this.

When there is no public exposure or risk identified, we continue to quietly follow up on these cases and carry out the necessary contact tracing.



Whether cases are Yukoners or outsiders, we remain fortunate that all our cases to date are linked to travel and we continue to have no evidence of community spread.

It is indeed distressing to look around the country and see how COVID is surging in so many of the provinces, and now has even struck Nunavut with the outbreak.

When we look outside, we can certainly take so listen how well we are doing in comparison, but we can also learn from these experiences how susceptible we remain to similar exposures to COVID that could occur at any time.

We also see that BC is struggling to contain cases, especially in the lower mainland.

This BC surge carries an important responsibility for us Yukoners who are sharing in the BC bubble.

We must respect the travel orders in the other public health orders that Doctor Henry is putting in place at this time.

Be reminded that there is in place in BC a public health order limiting travel in and out of the lower mainland to essential travel only.

If you have plans to visit the lower mainland this week or next, you should seriously reconsider the timing and evaluate whether your travel is essential or not.

Be aware also if you do travel, the other orders currently in place in the lower mainland, particularly around restricting gatherings to household members only.



Before you travel anywhere in BC, you need to take the proper precautions and make sure you're following the orders imposed while you're visiting.

And while we maintain our bubble with BC, I want to continue to stress but folks who return maintain that low profile I have asked for before and self monitor for 14 days after returning.

That is why I strongly caution travellers to lay low in while in BC, to follow all those rules laid out.

No one wants to be the one who brings it home.

I know these last few weeks have been draining, as we follow events around the country as well as dealing with recent events here.

We have dealt with many emotional ups and downs here in the Yukon, and as we see what is going on in other provinces and even territories, it is hard not to feel discouraged.

But we have to keep in mind that there is much that is still under our control.

Every day, it is up to us to decide on actions that can other -- either perpetuate fear or make a positive impact on community togetherness and solidarity.

We are a community that is held together by its vibrant and welcoming people, and we need to consider that when we ourselves may be frightened.

We have had two recent public community exposure notices and we likely will have others.



Public exposures have put residents into a vulnerable position of being harshly judged and even feared by their peers.

Any of the public notifications we have put out have been low-risk and precautionary, ensuring that there was no inadvertent public exposure.

None of these public notifications to date has resulted in further positive cases.

Any of the contacts that we have seen that have been identified as COVID positive have been high-risk, symptomatic contacts identified through rigorous contact tracing.

Remember we are staying on top of these situations.

Through YCDC, contact of cases are identified and notified promptly and this process has helped prevent us from getting into larger outbreaks for ongoing transmission.

I have heard of numerous incidents that have included customers being turned away, visitors being told to go home, and individuals being told not to participate in organized events.

That is not how we treat our fellow community members.

This is a time for caution and vigilance, yes, but with a good tincture of kindness.

Acts driven by empathy, and not fear.

COVID is unavoidable.

We have seen now in several parts of the country where even tight border controls have not kept COVID out.

It is like the virus is always there.



Like frigid winter air, looking for its way into a warm house.

We need to accept that COVID is part of our lives right now.

If we take the right precautions, avoid large gatherings, maintain our social bubble landscape distancing measures, wearing a mask when it is appropriate, we are protecting ourselves as best as we can.

That is all we can do at this point.

I ask that you don't avoid or ostracize your fellow community members out of fear of contracting COVID.

We are in this together.

As soon as we begin refusing to help one another, we weaken as a community.

Many weeks ago, I talked about fear and brought up that Arabian proverb.

When danger approaches, seeing to it.

We can't run away from COVID.

We can't lock it outside our doors.

We must integrate this danger in our lives, live our lives as fully as we can with the present constraints, respect the threat, and meet it with the safety measures that we have learned or effective.

This leads me into the issue of misinformation that the premier also mentioned, and now many rumours that have been spreading.



And as the CMO H., I ask that each and every one of you check Yukon.ca as your first point of contact.

We keep this up to date, and a new infict -- information regarding cases or exposure notices -- notices will be there.

The spread of misinformation causes panic and fear that is unwarranted.

It is incredibly important to ensure the source you're receiving information from his legitimate.

Living in a small territory, information spreads quickly and as it spreads, it can move even further from the truth.

We need to be careful before we communicate to others what we have heard through the grapevine.

COVID rumours can be damaging, damaging to morale and to our trust in public health.

When in doubt, listen to these press conferences, check the government of Yukon social media and website for any information regarding COVID.

In the last week, there have been many updates about the progress of vaccination for COVID-19, and we are all excited about the recent Moderna announcement and look forward to more details on these two messenger RNA vaccines and others to come down the pipeline.

I am receiving many great questions about vaccine development and availability, but as we work through the initial preparations for receiving vaccine, we too only have so many answers at this time.

As the first two products continue through phase three trials, the next steps will be health Canada operable in then potential location around the country based on a prioritization process.

Vaccine availability will continue to increase through next year, and the way things are looking so far, I think we can now look forward to receiving vaccine sometime in 2021.

For our loved ones in long-term care facilities, COVID-19 has undeniably taken hold of many facilities across the country and throughout the world.

It has been a trying time which for many months has left us without the opportunity to socialize and check in on our loved ones like we did just months ago.

Our long-term care facilities have been doing a fantastic job here in the territory, following the guidelines in strict protocols.

Stock continue to go above and beyond for residents.

Because all our facilities are publicly on, we are in an advantageous position compared to other parts of the country.

While some facilities are having to increase restrictions, we can let up a little and again look for some rebalancing of the risk.

Residents will now be able to designate two additional family or friends to be added to their visitor list to expand the number of people vacancy.

I know there are many who will welcome this change.

It is that time of year also when we would begin to lineup our weekends visiting craft fairs and stock up on gifts for family and friends from local artisans.



Craft fairs or events that brighten everyone's spirit.

In previous years, we filled through hallways of community centres or the old -- old fire hall.

However, we all know that this year will not be the case.

Many craft fairs have submitted operational plans, and we have been happy to prove them.

The level of detail and care being taken to protect patrons while allowing the advance to carry on has been very impressive.

We should show our support to our local entrepreneurs and visit the craft fairs this year, but we need to do so by strictly following the public health measures being set out to keep these events safe.

If you're feeling sick, please do not go to any public event.

Have a friend or family member face time you with local crafts.

If you want to purchase gifts, do so virtually.

Wash your hands while there, frequently, and carry hand sanitizer with you that has at least sixty percent alcohol.

Maintain distancing of at least two metres between yourself and others.

Wear a mask in any setting where physical distancing may be difficult.

And whenever you're asked to do so.



Remember to everyone planning to visit one of the craft fairs, be cautious, use your best judgement in common sense.

As we dip into colder weather, this week we bring out skis and snowshoes and machines and spend as much time outdoors as weather permits.

I know that we typically would be spending more time indoors, but it is known there is a higher risk of COVID-19 transmission enclosed and indoor settings.

As the winter months continue to keep encouraging eyes outside, we will be releasing COVID-19 guidelines specific to winter activities.

Outdoor activities are relatively low risk but still, always be aware and maintain your distance and your vigilance.

Again, if you're sick, don't go outside and mix.

Instead, get tested, stay home, stay isolated from others, rest up, and stay warm.

Finally, I am in conversation with government about potential masking policies toward the territory for enclosed public spaces.

I know and see that more and more people are using masks in public settings.

We know that evidence of effect is accumulating, as is practical experience and implementation of policies in various parts of Canada in the world.

I know there is public readiness for direction in this regard.

So I do implore you to acquire a nonmedical mask if you haven't gotten one already, or a few, and get used to using masks in public settings, especially when asked to or required to by the business and when there is any concern that physical distancing may not be observed or possible.

We are currently exploring all the implications that masking policies may have for individuals, communities, and businesses.

That is all for my update.

Thank you.

Remember to take care of each other, to stay well.

Thank you, Merci.

>> Pat: Thank you, Premier Silver.

Thank you, Dr Hanley.

We will go now to the phone lines in begin with John from CKRW.

>> Reporter: Hi.

Dr Hanley, you say that wearing a mask is recommended where physical distancing may be difficult or near impossible, and if you have been around town you know that most businesses, it is physically impossible to properly distance.

What is preventing you from initiating some sort of nonmedical mask mandate now as a form of early direction from the public seeing as in the winter months, we will be inside more often?

>> Thank you for that question.

First thing, I want to say that retail spaces and businesses can be set up to allow for proper physical distancing.

I know that this doesn't always occur.

We have all seen instances where physical distancing is not respected or complied with.

But that doesn't mean to say that it is not possible.

So we have to come back to the basics of the Safe Six as fundamental requirements before going to the mask question which is that additional layer of protection.

So you can't substitute physical distancing with mask use.

We know that evidence does not support masks in and of themselves as adequate protection against COVID.

Masks are that additional layer.

We have to go back to those basics.

The second thing is, this is exactly to the point I was just speaking to at the end of my address.

I am very interested in this issue.

I do think there is, as I say, public readiness but it also-- rather than me advising government to do this overnight, there are so many considerations to address before we come out with a mask recommendation that we want to make sure that we are taking care of all the questions that are going to arise, should there be a change toward territorial mask policy.

>> Pat: Follow-up question?

>> Reporter: Yes.

In regards to the booming amount of COVID-19 cases in jurisdictions attached to our bubble here in the territory, I am wondering...

What is the outlook on restricting border crossings or any change in restrictions, seeing as we are seeing more frequent cases sort of popping up a year -- here in the territory in just within the spaces where we would not have to self isolate upon return such as BC or the territory.

>> Again, it is an important question.

One that we need to maintain transparency and eight revisiting.

This is something that I am certainly concerned about and talking very closely with Minister Streicker and with the premier about, you know, where we should or could go with our borders.

I think it is an important conversation, but I think there are also a few really key points to keep in mind with that as we look at the evidence.

One is that, as I was saying last week, if we look at importation risk from BC even as cases go up, the importation risk has not changed as much as we might think because the number of travellers has gone down.

So it is not an automatic that we are amplifying greatly our importation risk.

The other thing is that our cases, if we look at origin of cases, we have not had a documented Yukon case that has been directly related to the BC bubble.

We have had cases that have had nothing to do with the BC bubble, even once that we recently announced, that have been associated with travel outside the bubble.

I think we need to be careful about the assumptions we are making about origins of cases.

The third thing is that, if we look around the country, I mentioned this in my notes but even in places with some of the strictest border requirements, we are seeing cases come up and spread.

I will give two examples.

One is Nunavut which has had the strictest quarantine measures in the country -- Nunavut.

As we all know and are watching closely with our friends and Nunavut, they are seeing community spread in one community.

Manitoba is another example where they have had two isolation orders for people coming into the province from outside.

Now they have the highest per capita rate in the country.

I want to try to D-Link a little bit of that...

Of that association with just looking at the borders and not looking at how we prevent spread.

So to me, I think it is much more important wherever we go with quarantine as I territory, quarantine requirements, whether more open or more closed, that the critical thing is what we do to prevent transmission, how we prevent cases from becoming outbreaks, how we prevent outbreaks from becoming large outbreaks or multiple outbreaks, or turning into community transmission.

It really all comes back to us.

>> Pat: Premier Silver?

>> I think that is a great synopsis of all the things we need to consider.

But I would say that when it comes to regions that we have already opened up, like BC for example, we could have certain sections of provinces revert if we felt that there was a problem.

So we are monitoring the current situation but let's say any specific area of BC becomes a concern, we could require 14 day isolation for people coming from those specific regions as opposed to a province by province consideration.

But I completely agree with Dr Hanley on the current situation when it comes to the lower mainland, we are continuing to monitor their situation in that particular area.

John Streicker did share last week as well in the legislative assembly -- sorry, this week, that travel from BC is down this week alone by 15 percent.

It is not just one thing to consider, it is a whole bunch of things.

This is a good example, as we look at when a vaccine comes in play and as we get into situations where we are moving forward in our path forward and the triggers that allow us to go into the next phase, we could be considering the same thing where it is not necessarily a provincial consideration but a regional consideration based upon epidemiology.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Now to Claudiane, Radio-Canada.

>> Reporter:

[Speaking French]

>> Interpreter: So the question is for Dr Hanley.

Could you please repeat in French, what are the new measures that you're putting in place at this point?

[Speaking French]

>> Reporter:

[Speaking French]

>> Interpreter: Only two new people, or are you talking about two families that we can add to the bubble?

[Speaking French]

>> Pat:

[Speaking French]

>> Reporter:

[Speaking French]

>> Interpreter: Is nonessential travel to BC permitted, or is there anything changing there?

[Speaking French]

>> Pat: Thank you.

We will move to Gabrielle, Whitehorse Star.

>> Reporter: Hi.

I'm hoping the premier can answer how many doses of the vaccine the Yukon will receive?

>> So the quantities for province and territory has not been established yet.

We are still and let their trials for both companies, and the effectiveness based upon those trials will determine a lot of the distribution as well.

The latest trials for the Moderna vaccine have been done for elderly patients as well, they are starting to see who it does effective for so that will be a consideration.

I will leave that all up to a science and the doctors but suffice to say, the results will determine distribution quite a bit in strategies.

Maximizing the results by targeting where the vaccines are most effective.

Conversations at the level, at our level right now with the provinces and territories is about distribution and the responsibilities they are in of government.

>> Pat: Dr Hanley?

>> I agree with the premier.

It is really too early to say.

One thing we can be sure of this there will be enough vaccine for anyone that wants or needs it.

But the quantities of each vaccine as it comes through operable processes in the prioritization that I talked about, that is where participating in these national conversations but we don't have the

numbers yet and we won't for a while, until all of those processes are followed.

But we are already getting to work on looking at all of the logistical considerations for receiving and distributing a vaccine in the coming year.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Follow-up question, Gabrielle?

>> Reporter: Yeah, I am wondering if there is a plan for phasing into the vaccine stage availability.

Our reopening plan, you know, it halts at this stage were a vaccine is available.

Like a green light, a good to go.

I'm assuming it is not really going to work like that, it will be a bit of a slower process.

>> Sure.

Yeah, absolutely.

That is a great question.

And again, that is part of-- I think that is the blanks that we will be filling in as we get closer to that vaccine availability.

And again, working with government on the forward path forward because it is certainly not going to be overnight.

It is going to be a gradual accumulation of-- at least what we expect is a gradual accumulation of immunity in the population that would allow us to then consider that kind of gradual return to normal.

>> Pat: Thank you.

We will move to Maryne, L'Aurore boréale.

[Speaking French]

[Audio Difficulties]

>> Pat: We can hear you Maryne.

>> Reporter:

[Speaking French]

>> Interpreter: We are talking a lot about vaccines.

Are there any plans on how the implementation will be made?

Is the vaccine going to be made compulsory for people coming from outside?

For example,, for other people in the Yukon?

[Speaking French]

>> Pat: Could you please repeat in English?

>> Sure.

The question was whether we would be asking for mandatory vaccination as we see the COVID vaccines or travellers coming in to be vaccinated.

I think that would be very unlikely.

I don't anticipate making vaccines mandatory.

We haven't made any other vaccines mandatory.

We would be much more likely to be working with just giving you the information as we receive it, giving you the best advice we can, encouraging the population and ourselves of the advantages of being vaccinated to allow us that return to normal.

So...

An obligatory vaccine would not be part of that equation.

>> Pat: Thank you.

[Speaking French]

[Speaking French]

>> Interpreter: So...

Given that students in grades ten and 12 might be at risk if they are not in school full-time, how do you justify to parents the decision of keeping these students on a part-time basis in school for these higher grades in high school?

>> We are either unique situation in the Yukon and that we do have all of our students back in school.

Albeit the grades ten to 12 are on a part-time schedule.

We have had the Minister of education report back anecdotally of families struggling in this situation but also's -- families thriving in this situation.

The most important thing to remember is we are putting in place these guidelines based upon health, based upon the recommendations from the Chief Medical Officer and making sure that ultimately, the number 1 goal is to keep our students and the custodial staff, the teachers, the parents, everybody safe in this global pandemic situation.

I believe the department is doing a fantastic job in this pursuit.

It is not a good year, it is not an easy year.

Being a former high school teacher, I can say that in the best of times high school is a very stressful situation.

Add to that situation of part-time learning, COVID-19, these are extremely stressful times but the department is working with all the stakeholders in education including parents, school councils, the administration, to make sure to first and foremost maximize the safety of our students but also to make sure that education is happening in the best way possible.

Again, by saying that, we do recognize it is a stressful situation but I do commend the teachers for being flexible.

I commend the students for thinking outside the box which, again post COVID, is going to be another tool in your toolbox, being able to be resilient in the face of adversity, and that is something that Yukoners do anyway.

We are seeing it with our students.

There are supports for mental health for students.

They need to reach out to their counsellors and their teachers for extra support for education as well.

There are lots of opportunities to talk with tutors and to make sure the educational system is there for you if you need it to be there for you.

[Speaking French]

>> Pat: Thank you.

We'll move now to Beth, Canadian press.

[Inaudible]

>> Pat: Bath?

We will move on then to Haley, Yukon News.

>> Reporter: Thank you.

Question for Dr Hanley about the situation in Nunavut and I'm just wondering how closely you're following that, and if there are any lessons to be learned as far as population.

The territory is more comparable to the Yukon than, say, Ontario or Alberta.

>> Yeah, good question.

It is important for me not to speak to information about Nunavut that is not otherwise publicly available.

But as I alluded to in my notes, it is important for us to take lessons wherever we can from whatever we see in other regions.

One of the lessons again as if we focus solely on...

On orders and self quarantine measures and entry, and don't pay attention to the rest, we can quickly see problems arise.

To me, knowing that Nunavut had, and for very good reasons I must say, that they have maintained very strict quarantine measures but you see that even in the face of those strict quarantine measures, the ability for COVID inadvertently to enter.

The disruption and the number of cases that can happen just from one, or presumably one introduced case.

I don't have detailed information.

I do stay in close touch with all of our northern colleagues in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut as well as...

To some lesser extent.

We remain in close contact and collaboration, including weekly teleconferences.

So we do exchange information and exchange quite in-depth lessons learned, or experiences and what we are learning from experiences.

Exchanging information, so we have a high level of collaboration.

On the other hand, there are I think significant differences in Nunavut having remote, isolated communities that are not connected by road, that are largely Inuit and culturally very uniform, and it being largely Inuit communities and of course a vast territory.

Very different southern connections.

Very different transport.

Very different logistical challenges.

Although we have a few things in common such as being large and sparsely populated territories, there are also important differences that factor into both the different preparations and the COVID response that you will see play out differently in the territories.

>> Pat: Premier Silver?

I reached out to Joel, the premier this morning, and you know, the conversations we have been having over the past 20 something odd Council of the Federation meetings, the premier has really stepped up.

You can imagine conversations with premiers right across the country of larger jurisdictions, but Joe has always been very dedicated to having the voice of Nunavut in the territories at those bigger conversations, talking about the unique circumstances not only just in Nunavut but in all three territories.

He has always had we want to try to avoid this but we know it might not be possible, and we will be ready for it because of the vigilance of his government in medical officers as well.

We sent Joe love and support from Yukon this morning, what they are going through now is what we had with our first cases.

It is the wake-up call and we wish them all well and we know they too will get through this by following the advice of their medical officers, having their own Safe Six.

I know he is out on a social media right now, doing exactly what he needs to do to make sure that people in his communities are as safe as possible.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Follow-up?

>> Reporter: Thank you, yeah.

I just want to clarify, the second case that is not counted in our numbers, I just want to clarify the person that is not a resident of

Yukon, will they be returning to their home jurisdictions?

They are just a visitor in that case?

Want to make sure I understood that.

>> Yes, that is correct.

>> Pat: Philip, CBC?

Can you hear us?

>> Reporter: --making masks mandatory in common areas, are these supposed to be in effect now?

>> Pat: We missed the first part of the question, I think you were referring to schools?

>> Reporter: I'm sorry, yes.

We have announced an update to the school guideline earlier this month and I wonder, are those updated requirements supposed to be in effect now?

>> Reporter: My understanding, we made those recommendations in our guidelines.

The guidelines have not actually been finalized yet, so we wanted to give, after conversations with the Department of Education, we wanted to give that heads up that the masks will be a requirement, moving from a recommendation to a requirement as part of the updated health and safety guidelines.

I believe we were looking at the actual implementation of that for the new year.

I will have to confirm that for sure, but I think again, that was not to be intended for overnight because we realized this has to be worked through with the school councils, into the school operational plans, and again, there is this implementation process.

But we know that some schools have of course already been using masks, and it has depended on different circumstances at different schools how that recommendation has actually played out according to their operational plans.

So what we will see, what we will anticipate seeing is a much more uniform application of mask use in common areas, in the weeks and months ahead.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Follow-up?

>> Reporter: No thank you.

>> Pat: Thank you very much.

That ends the update for today.

I would like to thank everyone for their time.

Our next COVID-19 update will take place Tuesday, November 24th, at 9:30 AM.