

## COVID-19 Facebook live update: September 23, 2020

>> Pat: Good afternoon.

I'm Pat Living with the department of health and social services and moderator for the COVID-19 update for Wednesday, September 23.

We are joined by the Yukon Premier Sandy Silver, and Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of health Dr Brendan Hanley.

Our sign language interpretation is being provided by Mary Tiessen and Andre Bourcier from French language services Director 12 translate any questions from French-speaking journalists.

Following our speakers we will go to the full length for questions from reporters and then to reporters here in the room.

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

Before we begin, I would like to verify that everyone can hear us?

If any reporters are having a problem, please e-mail [alexis.miller@gov.yk.ca](mailto:alexis.miller@gov.yk.ca).

Premier Silver?

>> Thank you, Pat.

Hello everybody, and thank you for joining us again today.

It is great Debbie back here with Dr Hanley and with Mary on the traditional territory of the Taa'an Kwächän Council and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation.

Over the past few weeks I have been travelling around the territory visiting communities to check in at people, with municipalities and First Nations leadership.

I have been to Dawson city, to Beaver Creek, Haynes Junction, Watson Lake, had many great meetings with different folks, including the new chief and Council of the yard First Nation.

We have also been meeting virtually with leaders, including...

And also Ross River.

Each community is dealing with unique challenges related to the pandemic.

Watson Lake, the gateway to the Yukon is on the front line when it comes to visitors and to our territory.

Those transitioning through it on their way to Alaska as well.

The team of enforcement officers working in and around Watson Lake and Junction 37, they are doing a fantastic job keeping travellers informed about the current situation in our territory and the responsibilities of those who are entering to visit or on their way through to our neighbouring jurisdictions.

I also visited Beaver Creek with Minister Coach -- Minister Streicker on the other end of the Alaska Highway.

Beaver Creek is seeing a lot of American travellers on their way to Alaska, and they are doing a great job keeping the community connected and protected.

We have had more than 48,000 travellers enter the territory over the past few months including more than 18,000 nonresidents transitioning through -- transiting through our territory.

Even with all of these travellers, we have not seen any cases related to people travelling through the territory.

We're very fortunate to be in the position we are in, and I want to thank everybody for their individual efforts on our behalf.

I especially want to thank Donna at the visitors information Centre in Beaver Creek, for her warm welcome and engaging conversation.

Donna is a character, and I love characters.

It has not been a normal year in terms of tourism, but our tourism staff continue to do great work and continue to keep visitors informed about the territory and how to travel respectfully through and in the Yukon communities during the pandemic.

To all the VIC employees, thank you very much for your service and your adaptability.

It was also really impressive to see how White River First Nation communities working together with the Canadian border service agents officers stationed at the Yukon Alaska border to support them and keep up their spirits.

The border service agents were all wearing the fire -- the fire weed hero pins beaded by community members in Beaver Creek.

These are the same things that the volunteers have been making for all the front-line workers across the territory to support them

as they do the critical work they need to keep our communities safe, protected, and connected.

Dr Hanley, Dianne Mary, our ASL translator all have those pins and I must say, they really are a source of strength for me and others as we wear them.

The last six months have been challenging for everyone, and we know that the pandemic is not over yet.

These fire weed hero pins represent the strength, support and community spirit that contributes to our territory's resilience and makes Yukon such a fantastic place to live.

I want to give a special shout out to all the beaters who have taken the time to make these beautiful tins because they really mean to work those mean the world of those who wear them.

Wrote my community visits, I was so impressed by the way the communities are coming together to support one another and to adapt to the new normal we all find ourselves in.

It is not just the communities, it is the Yukon business community as well.

Local businesses have faced unprecedented challenges this year in they have shown incredible courage and determination, to adapt to a new landscape that we all find ourselves in.

My colleagues in I, including Minister Pillay and Minister Dendys have been in close contact with Yukon business community to hear their concerns, identify challenges, and find opportunities to support our local economy.

Throughout the pandemic, our government has recognized the need to support local businesses and we will continue to do so.

We introduced several programs including the Yukon business relief program to support local businesses who are the heart of our economy.

This program has helped hundreds of businesses in our territory to pay their bills and to stay in operation.

Minister Pillai will be sharing more information about this important program tomorrow.

We also changed the Yukon nominee program to help with nominees that are faced with layoffs or with reduced hours.

The Yukon essential workers support program that provides temporary financial support for low income workers delivering essential services.

Another important program we introduced is the paid sick leave rebate program which allows Yukon workers to -- Yukon workers without sick leave to stay at home for up to ten working days if they are sick related to having to self isolate.

It is also available to those who are self-employed.

This is a very important program designed to support Yukon's workforce in it has sparked national conversations about how a society can come together to better support workers without sick leave.

You can find more about all these programs online at [Yukon.ca](http://Yukon.ca).

It is important to know we have these programs available today and it is important as well to know there is going to be more programming to come.

And our government continues to develop ways to support Yukon businesses because we recognize the impact of COVID-19 or ongoing.

Just today, we are releasing additional money to the Yukon airline air North as part of the federal aviation relief funds.

We anticipate having information about new and expanded programs as our response evolves and meets the changing needs of Yukon businesses.

In addition to supporting Yukoners and Yukon businesses, our government is also taking measures to protect our territory and minimize the spread of COVID-19.

We continue to enforce restrictions of those entering into our territory.

Those transitioning through our territory still need to move through within 24 hours while staying on their designated route.

Those coming from outside British Columbia or the other territories still need to isolate for 14 days.

These requirements are set out in declarations that the visitors must sign upon entry in they must abide to these declarations.

We have laid three new charges under the civil emergency measures act in the last few days.

Two of these were for indoor social gatherings of over ten people, and one was for failure to self isolate as required, bringing the total number of charges to 15.

I cannot express enough -- I cannot stress enough how important it is for individuals entering into our territory from outside the bubble to continue to self isolate 14 days upon entering.

We currently have no active cases of COVID and Yukon, which means the biggest threat is the importation of the virus from another jurisdiction where there still are active cases.

Practising the Safe Six which includes self isolating as required is the best way and remains the best way to keep our territory healthy and safe.

All of us, residents and visitors alike, we must do our part to prevent the spread of this disease.

We will continue to ensure that these measures are enforced.

We all have a role to play, but there is also -- we also need to recognize that we are all in this together.

And I want to remind all Yukoners and visitors to be kind, to be patient, and respectful to one another.

If you have any concerns or issues, please contact our enforcement team at [covid19enforcement@gov.yk.ca](mailto:covid19enforcement@gov.yk.ca), or call 1-877-374-0425.

Before we move on to Dr Hanley today, I would also like to take time to note that the government does continue to work through this pandemic on other issues and programming, and continuing

to deliver on commitments we have made to Yukoners.

One such commitment is seasonal time change.

We are continuing with the planned introduced in the spring.

This plan will see Yukoners staying on our summertime and not falling back this November.

More information will come on this, but I have been getting questions as we get deeper into the fall and I want to remind Yukoners that we have not changed our commitment to this issue.

Thank you very much for listening to the update.

Dr Hanley?

>> Thank you, Premier Silver.

I am sure anyone tuning in now, apart from having monitored the throne speech, have also been watching the numbers as the pandemic surges in various parts of the world including areas close to home.

Recent media coverage has he Europe, the US, and even Canada on the possible brink of a second wave of COVID-19.

Modelling information figures released yesterday by Canada's chief public health officer, Dr Tam, show the epidemic is accelerating rapidly.

Dr Tam warned that if Canadians don't continue to practice public health measures, the virus could be expected to surge faster and stronger than the first wave.



Projections indicate that cases could climb to more than 5,000 per day, and short-term projections show there could be over 150,000 cases by early October and more than 9,000 additional deaths.

Even while we remain free of active cases, I think these projections tell us how serious it is that we continue to follow the Safe Six.

That we wash our hands or use hand sanitizer, that we stay two metres apart from others not in our bubble, that we stay home and away from others when sick, and that we keep our social circles small.

The only protection against COVID-19 is and how we behave.

And Yukon, we have only had to manage COVID cases occasionally, but we are continually managing COVID risk.

The risk of one COVID incursion that turns into an outbreak the risk of a case or cluster or outbreak, being life-threatening to some.

We are stretching our healthcare or our public health capacity.

Managing COVID risk means being vigilant while keeping a balance.

It means reasonable preventive measures in place that makes sense for us where we are, with that community trust mission.

But without having to undergo that restrictions that other areas have faced and are now facing again.

If we can keep open, but with the Safe Six and with carefully applied measures, we will tolerate cases.

We are continually seeking to maintain that balance even while the risk of introduction grows.

We have done well, and by holding onto these measures, we will continue to do well even if we see cases.

I have heard already how tiring the says.

I have even heard from teachers that doing this in the schools after a month is tiring, and is it all really necessary?

I think it is, because if and when we see cases in schools, we can keep going.

We can keep schools open and keep kids learning in keep everyone while, if we continue to maintain that balance.

And just as a second serves or wave may hit, we could also begin to see influenza and other respiratory viruses circulating.

If we are lucky, in Canada we will experience what Australia and other southern hemisphere countries faced, a very low influenza season.

But we don't know that this will be the case in North America.

As you can -- Yukon CMH, I have always stressed how important it is to get your flu shot.

This year I think we can all agree it is even more important than usual.

Since we can't tell the difference between COVID and the flu by symptoms alone, what we want to prevent is people getting sick from either, and especially from both.

There are always lots of good reasons you can choose wide to get the flu shot, and this year's line for the flu vaccine campaign is what is your why?

We all have our different priorities.

Force on, it is to keep family safe.

For others, to keep themselves healthy.

But this year, part of that why is to prevent the flu so we don't get sick with both at the same time.

I am asking everyone to prevent what they can, and while immunization against influenza is never a guarantee against infection, it still remains our best tool to prevent influenza.

This year's flu clinics will look quite different if you're in Whitehorse.

In rural communities, they will be more or less the same as usual through the health centres.

In Whitehorse, all clinics are being centralized at the Yukon convention Centre.

We won't have the usual array of settings and even Whitehorse Health centre will not be the hub for the flu vaccine.

The flu shots will be available at the convention centre on a drop-in basis, with no need for appointments.

We're doing it this way to maximize the number of people getting the flu shot, to keep them safe well getting the shot, intimate cleaning between patients easier and faster.

Every effort to make this a safe and positive experience.

I have toured the centre and I can tell you paying attention to every detail to make this process as smooth and efficient as possible.

Further details will be coming in the next two weeks, but I can say that the vaccine will be available October 19th for those at higher risk including those with chronic conditions.

And then for the general public the following week.

This year pharmacists will be able to provide flu shots in the pharmacies and will be announcing their own details to come later.

As an additional preparatory step for this fall's influenza season, we have made some changes to the respiratory assessment centre, or the RAC.

First of all, the name is changing to the COVID testing centre, or CTC.

The CTC is fully staffed to provide COVID testing seven days a week, with the clinic open from 8:30 AM until 6:30 PM and will continue with nurse practitioner appointments as they usually were which are Monday to Friday from 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM.

For those who require respiratory assessment or diagnosis and treatment beyond simply testing.

I can perhaps remind people again that testing does not always have to be immediate.

For most people with mild symptoms, as long as they are feeling well and self isolating, taking the next appointment at the CTC will be the best way to get tested.

Going to the emerge after hours is not necessary except for those who need to be seen right away.

As always, for people with acute shortness of breath or requiring any kind of urgent or emergency care, the hospital emergency department is the best place to go.

There were some challenges this past week with backfilling staff at the CTC who needed to be off for various reasons.

The department of health and social services is working with human resources to further develop a reliable on-call staffing pool and we are confident in our ability looking forward to be able to provide testing seven days a week.

The increased hours of the CTC as part of the efforts to boost our testing capacity as well as in anticipation of possible increased demand during the upcoming influenza season.

Last spring, we saw a lot of flu at the end of the season, just as COVID was making itself known.

At that time, once testing for COVID was in place, every person tested for influenza was also tested for COVID.

With our inability to tell the difference between the two, any signs or symptoms of flu will mean this year a COVID test as well, as it has been throughout.

But don't worry, it is only one swab for both viruses.

For parents who may be concerned about children having-- about children having to have a COVID-19 test, we are in touch with the work that has been done in BC to create a new saliva method instead of a swab.

It is a gargle and spit method for testing for COVID.

The results have been promising, and BC is sharing this information.

We are working with our BC lab partners to see just how we could add this option to our testing in Yukon.

With this less invasive test for children, it may be a kinder option for kids who might have to be tested multiple times over the coming fall and winter months.

So, more on that as we get further along that pathway.

Testing of children is one issue that has been raised many times, and I have received many letters or e-mails from families and parents.

But this is, I hope, addressed in the traffic light advice that we have issued to schools and to parents.

And this has been sent to schools for broad sharing and is now also posted on Yukon.ca.

To go over the pathway briefly, red symptoms mean cough, fever, or difficulty breathing.

That means stay-at-home until you're both tested and all better.

Yellow symptoms means stay at home for a day and see what happens.

If symptoms are single and improve after a day, you can go back to school.

No need for a test.

A simple runny noses also find to return to school if you're otherwise well.

Two or more yellow symptoms means stay home and get tested, or stay home for ten days.

The advice for kids under six, mostly for the daycare audience, is slightly different from the older kids and adults.

I realize that other jurisdictions are coming up with varying recommendations.

We think our guidance is based on a good balance of pragmatism with a low tolerance for symptoms that are more associated with COVID, in order to keep COVID risk at schools to a minimum.

As always, we will see how well this works to keep the risk low while keeping kids as much as possible in their learning environments and their parents at work.

We will continue to monitor and compare notes with other jurisdictions, and modify if we need to.

Grown-ups have to stay home when they are sick too.

Don't try to show how tough you're by going to work.

You could be putting your coworkers or anyone else you come into contact with at-risk.

We are working on specific tools for adults too but the content and the principles are the same as what we have issued for schoolchildren.

We have talked about how lucky we have been in Yukon.

I feel lucky as well to be part of this community that is so supportive of our efforts to keep Yukoners informed and save.

We will continue to work to maintain the best balance, living with COVID risk while taking the necessary precautions and maintaining our vigilance.

Thank you for all your efforts and participation and taking the Safe Six to heart, and don't forget that important seventh step.

Be kind.

That is all for today, thank you.

>> Pat: Thank you, Dr Hanley.

Thank you, Premier Silver.

Now to the phone lines and we will begin with Haley from Yukon News.

>> Reporter: Thank you.

My question was for the premier.

I was hoping to get a reaction to the throne speech today and specifically, if you're hoping to implement pharmacare in the territory and if you're hoping for additional healthcare funding announcements?

>> Thank you, for the question.



And again, you know, just heard it in the last hour or so so just highlights right now.

I can't pick one highlight necessarily.

There were several commitments that are extremely important.

Long-term care was part of it, getting people back to work, support for tourism and cultural sectors.

An action plan for women.

Initiatives on climate change, green energy, and of course universal daycare as well.

So there's lots of things to talk about, and we will be waiting for more of the details as we work with our federal counterparts.

But cautiously optimistic on a lot of things here.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Second question, Haley?

>> Reporter: My follow-up related to that.

I don't have the background on that particular issue but I am wondering if pharmacare is something being considered for the Yukon?

>> So we have seen Ottawa announced pharmacare over a few different political parties over the years.

What I heard, which was exciting to me, you know again, we will see if there are those details and the devil is in those details.

We are moving in the fall into conversations with the Canadian health transfer.

Those are going to be interesting conversations as well.

It was very interesting to hear that the federal government wants to step up into the space of universal child care as well.

So whether it is pharmacare or a conversation about universal daycare, or how that pertains to the federal partnership with spending, with the provinces and territories, again, lots of positive things to be said in the speech from the throne.

Interesting to see how that translates into action items as we move into the fall.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Claudiane, Radio-Canada?

>> Reporter: Yes, still on the throne speech.

Premier, there was no specifics on a northern package for impacts on COVID in the throne speech.

Is that they disappointment?

>> No, not at all.

I just met over the phone with my counterparts premier Cochrane...

This morning.

We had a conversation about how the negotiations are going on the northern support package side of the restart.

We are getting there.

I would say that we are very close to figuring out the final details on that when it comes to Yukon's northern support package.

And more to come on that as well, but we are getting there and I will be very happy to announce the details of that as we go.

I have to give a shout out to all the premiers right across Canada who recognize the unique circumstances that we find ourselves in in the North.

We have seen language from the Council of the Federation to support the territories, unique circumstances, per capita spending -- it should not be the only consideration one Ottawa is dealing with packages for specific regions.

There are some unit costs there.

We have been pushing for base plus when it comes to a lot of these envelopes that came out of the restart and hopefully we will have some updates and some positive updates tomorrow or the next day.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Next question, Claudiane?

>> Reporter:

[ Speaking French ]

>> Interpreter: So the question for Dr Hanley, given the economic recovery and opening the BC border we don't have more cases than they did in the past, are you considering the possibility of opening the border with other provinces to permit more of this economic tourism to trickle through the Yukon?

[ Speaking French ]

>> Pat: Thank you.

We will move now to Philippe from CBC.

>> Reporter: Yes, hello.

I am wondering if there are plans to expand flu vaccinations in the community?

We have seen the expansion Doctor Hanley mentioned, will anything be changing in communities outside Whitehorse?

>> Thank you, that is a really great question.

We don't have a pharmacist in rural communities, on the question of pharmacies.

Also, by and large, the availability of flu vaccine in rural communities tends to be greater.

The means to be able to efficiently give a flu vaccine in rural communities is-- the capacity is already there, so it is really just a matter of organizing, more or less among the lines previously -- that are previously well practised.

It is definitely much more challenging giving a flu vaccine and how they are been centre of Whitehorse, just dealing with a large population with all of these factors such as availability of appointments, a large population converging on relatively small centres, parking, all of these issues.

So really, the logistical considerations related focus on our one large ergonomic -- economic areas.

Our one basically normal practice should take care of everyone who needs vaccines in rural communities.

The timing, the concentration on higher risk people, public for the second week, but things tend to go a lot more smoothly in rural communities anyway naturally, just based on the capacity and smaller populations.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Another question, Philippe?

>> Reporter: Yes.

It has been a long while since we checked in on the availability of personal protective equipment.

I just wanted to ask, doctor, how you feel healthcare services have access -- to we have enough access to masks and protective equipment these days?

>> Yeah, I don't have the exact numbers at my fingertips, but we're in a solid position I would say.

We were of course facing shortages as the rest of the country was in the early days, and putting mechanisms in place to centralize the acquisition of PPE and inventory and to make sure that we were keeping track, maybe had better and more timely systems in place for keeping track.

And then, estimating projected needs based on different usage and projected usage is based on the different facilities back the hospitals.

But also, other users such as physician clinics, community nursing of course, and First Nations usage in the communities.

So, all to say that the aim, also with federal support was to develop a 12 week inventory of PPE and I know that we are heading well towards that target.

I know that we have at least six weeks, as of a few weeks ago, so we are really heading to a comfortable place I think.

But where we are towards that 12 week target, I can't tell you.

But we can bring that back to you.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Before we move onto the next question, Dr Hanley, we had a number of requests for you to respond in English to the question Claudiane asked about the borders.

>> Sure.

The question, as I recall, it was...

The question was especially responding to the needs of the tourism industry and...

With a purpose to be looking for more possibilities for increasing tourism.

Are we looking at further border openings beyond the BC bubble?

And so, I guess I gave a fairly long answer.

But to summarize, the one thing that I wanted to make clear is that is always a government decision.

And a lot of the government decision depends on the advice that I give based on the work of our team and our analytics.

Roughly, we have six criteria-- as in the path forward, we do use those six criteria which include importation risk, so that is the number of travellers coming in from a particular place based on COVID prevalence, based on how we're doing locally, adherence to public health measures, public health capacity, healthcare capacity, presence of community transmission or not.

All of that really factors into that decision.

We're also at a time that we are recognizing tourism is, even as in the national news this morning, tourism isn't happening a lot.

That is kind of the stark reality that Canadians are not travelling.

No matter what measures might be put in place, it is a difficult time for tourism at the moment.

We just had our recognize that that is the reality.

The other stark reality is that..

Although we want to do our best to maintain or open borders with BC, this probably isn't the best time to be recommending further openings.

I know I have mentioned this on several of my recent media updates, that we are continuing to look got done increase in cases, significant increases now even at the point of a potential large surge in cases in many other jurisdictions.

So definitely importation risk is going up at the moment.

So again, it is all a matter of trying to find that right balance, where we have done a lot.

I mean, just and opening up to BC, that was a big move.

And yes, we have demonstrated that we were able to do that did we have done well with that.

But is this the right time to make that next move, right when we are on that real second upward curve?

This is a time to be a little bit more careful, and for me, it is a matter to watch and see what happens.

Where will we go, will he get over this curve and then be able to reevaluate that importation risk compared to the other criteria, then what are the opportunities and potential benefits.

Let's get some more like I thoughts and analysis around that.

So that is...

The other point that I did not mention in French, but I will mention in English, is as I said even a month ago, I really focus now is getting kids into schools.

We are now a month and a half, doing that safely.

Still working out a lot of kinks because kids and teachers and staff are still getting used to that and that is definitely been a prime focus.

And again, in view of rising epidemiology.

It's perhaps not the best time to open up further.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Will go now to -- sorry, apologies.



Premier Silver?

>> Thank you, Pat.

I just want to add on to that.

Thanks to Dr Hanley clarifying the recommendations coming from the Chief Medical Officer, that policies come from governments.

Whether that is federal governments, territorial or provincial, at that air Jermaine did a great job representing the tourism and culture department this morning on local news.

Speaking about breaking down the numbers.

70 percent of the tourism we rely on in the Yukon is international and as folks know, international borders are a federal decision to be made as well.

But again based upon the recommendations, it has been a very difficult season for tourism.

What I'm hearing from industry, they would much rather be working then getting support from government.

I really appreciate that.

I was in Dawson where the impact continue to be felt there as well.

Our government has taken early action to support local businesses and we are going to continue to work closely with the business community and that is the big thing, how we can continue to support local communities to find out who has fallen through the cracks as we have restart money or local support money from our departments now.

I do want to give a shout out to Sandy, the general manager of will earnest tourism Association of Yukon.

I was told she was busy going out and speaking to a lot of different tourism sector businesses.

This type of information coming back to us is extremely important as we design programs to work with those industry stakeholder folks and we will continue to work with TIA, with local businesses.

It is not the most optimal time.

There was a survey done enough Canadians.

7 percent of Canadians right now are willing to travel outside of the regions and these are the realities we are in right now.

As we are in the last stage of recovery before a vaccine, we are seeing increases in the epidemiology and being very concerned, and we are going to pause.

To predict the future is something we cannot do right now but at the same time, where there to support the seasonal businesses.

We are there to support the tourism sector.

>> Pat: Thank you.

We will go now to Maryne from L'Aurore boréale.

Are you with us?

>> Reporter:

[ Speaking French ]

>> Interpreter: The question is for the premier.

A lot of businesses are using immigration as a way to recruit personnel to fulfil some of their needs.

Most importantly, in early childhood care.

Is that government going to be able to help these organizations to be able to fulfil their needs in terms of her group meant?

>> Excellent question.

We have been working with a pilot project on the number on a program that has been very successful.

They have supports for folks in the nominee program and we have been working with the University when it comes to international students.

Our desire is to help support students who are here now to grow into Yukon as well.

This has been a conversation on the federal stage, as well with the premiers and with the first ministers meetings.

It is something we continue to monitor.

What we are noticing in Yukon and right across Canada is we need more people to be an employment and especially when it comes to really important feels like early childcare, this is not babysitting.

This is professionals providing professional services, professional education and the port for our youngest of Yukoners.

And it is extremely important.

I am very proud of the work about the team is doing in immigration, and will continue to support folks that are in Yukon, First Nations, municipal governments as they battle with trying to figure out how to put people to work in their communities, put Yukoners to work but also work with immigration to add to our population with new Yukoners.

>> Pat: Thank you.

[ Speaking French ]

>> Pat: We will go to Tim, CKRW.

>> Reporter: Good afternoon.

Both of you may want to answer this question but Dr Hanley, you had alluded to about people going to work, don't be a hero.

It is September, people may be out of sick days.

They may not be able to take one or two more days off or they may not be able to fall under the territorial program.

What do you suggest to both employers and employees who may be faced with this situation?

>> Well, I will certainly let the premier respond to potential solutions and supports.

But this is a big area, and it is another one of those barriers -- potential barriers to being off work when we are prevailing upon people to be.

This is one of the realities we have to struggle with.

I think again, we are really pleading here for the problem to be addressed.

And that is, this is public health safety first and foremost.

And I think if we are able to efficiently apply the right criteria, we can at least minimize unnecessarily staying away from work but really highlight where this is important.

Taking that 24-hour pause, assessing symptoms, and then getting tested when appropriate.

And then making sure the testing turnaround facilitates return to work when symptoms clear.

Really making sure that we have really robust and consistent direction and pathways to support rapid resolution of these dilemmas including rapid resolution to work when able to do so.

That is a big part of the kind of help -- public health process and that means clear guidelines, consistent guidelines, keeping up with changing literature and changing evidence and maintaining testing capacity.

The other aspect of course his ability to work at home.

So when people are well enough, as much as the work environment allows, being able to support and encourage that flexibility and being able to carry out work at home whether it is the kids who are sick for the adults who are sick.

But not to dock from that being, you know, air real reality, that is a society at think we have to better address.

>> Thank you, Dr Hanley.

It is definitely something we took seriously from the very beginning.

It was one of our first support programs, one folks were getting tested right away.

It was extremely important.

We know our government has sick leave provisions but we wanted to make sure that expanded to other businesses that did not offer it or even folks that are self-employed like artists for example.

It is an important question but I will say, the program is under subscribed.

I have not heard of a lot of people topping out on the service.

We know that the national government as well as looking toward modelling what we have done here in the Yukon with the national program.

It is being met in different jurisdictions with different premiers and different levels of interest, I guess.

But I think here in the Yukon, those who needed it applied, and what we need to make sure is if it is under subscribed, is it under subscribed because people don't need a Derby because people don't know that this program is available for nongovernment, private sector, self-employed individuals?

We are going to continue to do that analysis and make sure that our support programs fit the unique needs of Yukoners.

>> Pat: Follow-up?

>> Reporter: Yeah, actually my follow-up is quite scary.

I am wondering about your Halloween guidelines, when you're going to be coming out with those?

I know a lot of parents are wondering when those guidelines will be coming out.

>> Yeah, I don't like those scary questions.

But we are on it.

It will be in time.

It is actively on the table right now.

So I can't promise it for next week but I promise it will be available in time for the goodies.

>> Pat: Thank you.

I would like to thank everyone for their time today.

Our next COVID-19 update is Wednesday, September 30th, at 2:00 PM.