

COVID-19 Facebook live update: September 30, 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 30th.

We're joined by the honourable John Streicker, Minister of community services and Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of health, Dr Brendan Hanley.

Our sign language interpretation being provided by Mary Tiessen and Andre Bourcier from French language services directed will translate questions from French-speaking journalists.

Following our phone lines we will go to the phone line for questions from reporters.

And to reporters in the room.

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

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

If any reporters are having problems, please e-mail alexis.miller@gov.yk.ca Minister Streicker?

>> Thank you.

Thank you for joining us today on orange shirt day.

I am pleased to be here with Dr Hanley and Mary Tiessen.

And Andre.

Here on the traditional territories of the Taa'an Kwächän Council and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation.

We are now entering month seven of this pandemic.

That is a long time, and I know that fatigue can be said in a.

Some folks are getting tired of the measures that are in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and are getting tired of hearing about them.

This pandemic has impacted all of us, and it has been frustrating to see plans and projects have to be put on hold.

We are all anxious to find out when there will be a vaccine or treatment that might allow us to return to more normal routines.

I understand this is not easy.

Many of us haven't seen our extended families in many months, and connecting virtually and over the phone is no replacement for in person visits.

At the same time, we are watching developments in other provinces where many of us have friends and families, and there is cause for concern.

Rising case counts in Ontario and Québec indicate that the second wave of COVID-19 has arrived in Canada, and it serves as a reminder that we are not through this yet.

We must stay watchful going forward to keep our territory safe and healthy.

We had another positive case last week.

As Dr Hanley has explained, it is not a Yukoner so the case does not count towards our total, but it is the case here in the Yukon nonetheless.

I look forward to hearing from Dr Hanley on a and it -- on any further news about this case.

There is no cause for alarm.

We should anticipate some cases over time, but it is a good reminder that by practising the Safe Six, we keep each other safe.

We are well-positioned here in the Yukon to handle additional cases when they do arise, as long as we continue to be vigilant and take precautions.

Yukoners have done a terrific job of adjusting to the pandemic and practising the Safe Six.

We need to keep this up going forward because it is the best way to keep ourselves, our friends, our families, and neighbours safe.

We will also continue to require individuals entering the territory from outside of see territory bubble to self isolate for 14 days.

And a decision to change this requirement will be based on the recommendations of Dr Hanley and his team.

They continue to monitor developments here in the Yukon and across the country in order to provide our government with advice.

The pandemic remains a dynamic situation that is changing week to week and sometimes even day to day.

We cannot accurately predict what will happen at the virus a month from now so it is not possible to have confidence and any long-term predictions about where we will be in a few months time back or into next year.

We continue to be watchful, to assess, and to learn how best to protect and support Yukoners.

We do know that the Safe Six will always continue to be important.

We also need to continue to check in on our friends and neighbours, provide support, and look after one another especially as we enter the darker, colder part of the year.

Highway traffic has slowed down as we moved into fall and soon in the winter months, we anticipate it will slow down even more so.

We also expect the majority of travellers to the territory to be arriving by air in the coming months.

As travel patterns into the territory change, we are also adapting our approach to Yukon's borders.

Starting tomorrow, October 1st, we are transitioning to a 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM, seven days a week in person border presence at our Alaska Highway and junction 37 borders.

Travellers thought arrive at our land border outside of these hours and from outside of the BC territory bubble will still be required to sign a declaration and submit their self isolation plan along with the contact number so our border control team can follow-up.

There will be signs in place to inform travellers of this requirement and kiosks in place for visitors to put their declarations into.

These will be similar to self registration kiosks used at Yukon campgrounds.

Let me be clear.

It will continue to be the law under the civil emergency measures act, CEMA, to declare yourself if you're arriving from a jurisdiction outside of BC, NWT, or none of it, even outside of these daytime hours.

Self isolation is still required if you're arriving from a jurisdiction outside of BC, NWT, or Nunavut, unless you're a critical worker.

If you intentionally provide incorrect information or do not stop and declare yourself as required, it is considered an offence under CEMA and individuals will be charged.

Our enforcement teams will continue to greet each plane as they arrive at the Whitehorse airport.

Travellers can continue to expect to be greeted by our enforcement teams and if you're arriving from a jurisdiction outside of BC, Nunavut, or NWT, you will be required to declare this information and present your 14 day self isolation plan.

Our work with Canada to tighten up compliance for in-transit travellers has come a long way in the past two months, so we are also closing down the mandatory information stop near the top of Robert service way.

Our CEMA investigation unit continues to do great work.

Just a reminder that we ask Yukoners to alert us if you have concerns.

If you see or hear about behaviour that you think may not be in compliance with the health production order, please call our call centre at, 1-877-374-0425.

Yesterday, two new charges were laid under CEMA for failure to provide a declaration and failure to self isolate as required.

As of today, we have now laid a total of 17 charges under CEMA.

I want to thank the team of enforcement and information officers that have been working hard over the past months to keep Yukoners safe and travellers informed of the rules herein the Yukon, and the expectations of those entering and transiting through our territory.

As we all know, it was a very wet summer and officers were out there rain or shine, doing their part to keep our territory safe.

I know they weren't always greeted with kindness and respect, but they have played an important role in our collective effort throughout the pandemic so I say to them directly, thank you.

We have to remember, we are all in this together and we all have a role to play in keeping our territory safe through this uncertain time.

Remember to practice the six steps to staying safe to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

I like to say, practice Safe Six.

This means maintaining a two metre physical distance with everyone outside of our bubble.

Frequently washing our hands.

Staying home if we feel sick.

Not gathering in groups of more than ten and an indoor setting, 50 and an outdoor setting.

Limiting hour travel to rural communities.

And being respectful when we do go.

And self isolating as required.

We also need to be kind, respectful, in patient with one another.

These are challenging times, but we can get through them together.

I want to thank everyone contributing to team Yukon.

Our public servants, front-line workers, teachers, businesses, all of you who have been working tirelessly on so many fronts to keep us safe, informed, and engaged all these many months.

The many sacrifices we are all making save lives, so thank you.

Merci.

>> Pat: Thank you, Minister Streicker.

Doctor Hanley?

>> Thank you, and good afternoon.

I just wanted to begin with a quick review of the new case of COVID-19 diagnosed last Friday.

And again, this was an individual from outside of Yukon who took ill while visiting our territory.

Who presented to a hospital, and who remain stable and improving and hospital.

Although not a Yukon case, this does represent the first hospitalization of a diagnosed individuals since COVID-19 was first diagnosed in Yukon on March 22nd.

It is a good time to remind people of the work that is undertaken by YCDC or view gone communicable disease control.

Particularly, the work that is done before information is made public.

Within hours of receiving the positive test result on Friday morning, YCDC had interviewed the individual and their close contacts.

After reviewing the information, it was determined the risk of exposure to others was small, and no public notifications would be required.

At times, of course, we have had to issue notifications when we are not able to identify all individuals who may have been in contact with an infected person.

In this case, however,, YCDC was able to reach out to all the contacts and notification was not required.

The individual in this case did everything right.

They were not ill upon arrival in Yukon but did present for care once symptoms began.

When assessed at the emergency department, all infection control procedures were carried out appropriately.

The hospital was fully prepared for -- to care for any individual with COVID, in hospital staff cared for the individual with the usual calm and high standard of care that the hospital prides itself in.

When communicating case information to the public, there are two considerations that we always balance.

Communication of public risk with protection of confidentiality for the individual, that we have both an ethical and legal obligation to protect.

We will not breach an individual's privacy, nor will we speak before we have a good sense of the most relevant information to share.

In this case, it was important to wait until the initial contact tracing had been completed so we could provide that assurance around the low risk of exposure to anyone other than this individual's direct contact.

So this person did the right thing, and that serves as another reminder to Yukoners who travel to also continue to do the responsible thing, whether you're travelling to another Yukon community or to a location outside of Yukon.

Travel should provide a powerful reminder to observe those Safe Six rules that Minister Streicker just articulated.

Whichever community you're travelling to, respecting the norms and wishes of that community, protect yourself from exposure, and protect others when you come back.

With the recent surges of COVID-19 activity down south, it is even more important than ever to take her travel manners with you.

Taking a vacation does not mean taking a vacation from the rules.

Travel respectfully, know the rules of the community you're going to, and if you feel sick, self isolate until you can get tested.

When summer arrived, more and more Yukoners travelled to BC and parts beyond.

I would like to think anyone of them would have been able to identify their contacts had they been sick and hospitalized while elsewhere.

And that they would have been treated with care and compassion.

Please remember to treat our visitors with respect and compassion as well, whether healthy or real --or ill, whether here to work or here to visit.

Remember that travel manners go both ways.

Fast the Day's cool down and darken, so will we be returning more to the indoors.

We know that whether holidays and other activities traditionally bring people indoors more often, and looking ahead, we need to think about how we are going to do things differently within our new normal as it moves indoors.

Thanksgiving has been on the minds of many.

Some people have small, others larger families, and many of us have traditions built up over the years.

Thanksgiving should essentially be treated as any other gathering, with no more than ten gathered at a time and these people should either be in your bubble or spaced appropriately.

Some people are planning outdoor gatherings to accommodate larger family groups, or even serving dinner in shifts.

These are some of the actions you can take to reduce the risk of yourselves and your household and guests while still enjoying all the feasting's and festivities.

Everyone, particularly is waiting for guidance on Halloween.

I'm happy to offer some guidance on how to do that.

With proper precautions, it is okay for children to go trick-or-treating.

They should wear a nonmedical mask or face covering one appropriate, or consider using a Halloween themed cloth mask.

They should trick-or-treat with those within their consistent, in person social bubble and not gather or crowd doorsteps.

They which is room for a sword would be good to knock on doors with.

If you're distributing candy to trick-or-treaters, consider how you can do it safely.

May be used tools to distribute candy at a distance like a hockey stick or autonomous, have only one person responsible for handing out the candy, or sit outside to distribute only wrapped or store-bought treats.

And please don't leave treats out in a communal bucket.

Even though many children will be wearing mitts or gloves I expect, this is not a practice we should sanction.

That is a lot, of course, just from my words.

But the guidance will be posted on Yukon.ca by the end of this week.

If trick-or-treating is just not something you're going to be comfortable with, we will also have suggestions on other ways to make Halloween fun for kids.

Children have lost so much already as a result of COVID, but with some careful guidance we can make Halloween still happen in Yukon.

On the subject, we will also shortly be able to post our guidance on singing and playing wind instruments.

Before finalizing, we took some time to consult with all city band and other musical organizations to make sure the guidance was practical enough or rehearsal settings.

I will go over some of the principles.

Some of what singing and particularly wind music will look like this year.

Keeping a minimum of two metres between singers and musicians at all times.

Facing forward well singing or playing the instrument, so not in a circle are facing each other.

Conductors should maintain either four metres from the choir, Orchestra, or a face shield in two metres distance.

And performers should maintain four metres from the audience or be separated by a barrier such as a Plexiglas barrier.

Keeping rehearsals short is another risk mitigation and ensuring good ventilation when practising.

Of course, regular cleaning of instruments and mouthpieces and all of that will also be part of the guidelines.

The other guidance we are just finalizing as they much-anticipated return to work or activity after illness, and thought of course is very similar to the school guidance, the traffic light guidance.

We are just putting some final tweaks on that and we should also have that finalized and posted before the end of this week.

Again, I do keep getting asked about bubbles and that is a good thing, because I think the more we talk about it, the more we are clear on what our obligations are in regards to social bubbles and other interactions.

But the overall wording I like to use is, keep our social groups small and intimate.

We do suggest that people can and large bubbles, up to ten or 15 people.

In June when we first came out without guidance.

15 being on the higher side, but recognizing that some families are larger.

The language directly from the website says, -- some of this and I think it is worthwhile going back over it.

Your social bubble starts with people you live with, and who regularly come into your household.

And then slowly, add members to your bubble that make the most sense for you and your household.

For example,, people you may want to spend more time with, or another household with similarly aged children.

Everyone in the household must be part of the same social bubble.

Building your social bubble does not mean of course that the threat of COVID-19 is not here.

There is always that chance if we see an increase in the number of cases that we may have to put restrictions back in place.

So when you were having Thanksgiving dinner, keep this in mind.

The a deal social gathering is actually held outside, unless everyone inside is within your bubble.

Otherwise any indoor gathering should be limited to a maximum of ten.

And the more groups you're involved with, the smaller you should keep your social circles.

There is no hard math here.

This is guidance that should help you be aware of your contacts and keep them small.

If your social bubble for example is 15 people, be extra careful when you're in a sports many league.

The preferred arrangement would be a smaller household bubble so that your overall contacts are again kept to a reasonable and small number.

Again, keep your bubbles safe and consistent.

As we spend more time indoors, we have to be more vigilant about spacing from people not in our bubble, and let's continue to enjoy outside life as much as we can.

We have school groups, children in the classroom together, not socializing with others in the school but who will likely have a separate bubble outside of school.

So there could be some overlap there.

Then there are the sport bubbles as well.

As I said, the mini league opportunities.

Remember though that there are rules around mini league's and although they allow for closer interaction than the two metres, they are not the same as social bubbles.

And again, pulling off the website a few of those requirements.

You do not participate of course if you're required to self isolate.

Only play in a maximum of two mini league.

Organizers should keep a list of contacts within-- of the participants within a mini league.

And when not actually playing, a need to practice the physical distancing and other measures whenever possible.

So you're really only allowing those limited interactions that are part of playing a game in order to support the playing of the game and allowing those closer interactions.

But otherwise you're spaced apart.

And of course, perhaps most importantly, do not play if you're sick no matter how mild the symptoms are.

Again we are fortunate as we look around the country, how we have not had a rollback or restrict our public measures.

If sustained COVID activity does arrive in Yukon, you can ensure our bubble and gathering sizes will have to get small.

We are in a good place right now and we would like to stay here.

I think that's all for today.

Thank you.

>> Pat: Thank you.

We will begin with Maryne, L'Aurore boréale.

>> Reporter:

[Speaking French]

>> Interpreter: The question is for Dr Hanley.

Some schools have prevented kids from singing out loud in classrooms.

And I am wondering if the new guidelines you're going to issue are going to permit kids to start singing again in their classrooms.

[Speaking French]

>> Pat: Could we have that in English, please?

>> Sure.

So yes, the guidance is intended for use within school is as well.

The musical guidance.

So we would expect that schools can adapt following the guidance to be able to allow for music and band within a school settings, again as long as the rules are followed.

You know, as with any of these one-off guidances, it will then eventually be incorporated into overall school guidance.

So I think we have to allow ourselves that there are these separate pieces that are almost updates, but, yes,, this guidance will be able to be applied to community as well as school setting.

>> Pat: Thank you.

[Speaking French]

>> Pat: Haley, Yukon News?

>> Reporter: Thanks.

I guess my first question was about enforcing the declaration of having people at the info stop.

Are you sort of relying on community complaints, or how do you figure out that someone has not declared their entry into the territory?

>> Thanks, Haley.

I think there will be a few ways.

First of all, the info stop that is at the top of Robert service way was really for those travellers that are in transit.

And we have been doing all sorts of work with the Canadian border services agency to tighten that up.

They have first record the number of entry points, they have got a checkout system, they Charlotte information back with us.

We have found that is working much better several months ago before the upgrades came into place.

What we know is travel is dwindling at both Watson Lake and...

And we know that travellers tend to come across during those hours, sort of the midmorning and late afternoon.

So we think we are going to capture most of those travellers.

And I think than, we will use the system afterwards where they are still required to sign a declaration.

If someone sees people, like they do now into the report, we follow up, but we could also put in place a check stop now in then to see if people are doing it and those kinds of check stops create sort of a message back to travellers that we are serious about this and they know we are going to follow-up.

So I think we will use a variety of techniques, although we think that the number of travellers that will be passing through while it is staffed will be the preponderance of the travellers.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Do you have another question?

>> Reporter: Yeah, my other question, I know as usual, limited information is given out about people that test positive.

But I was wondering in this case if it was a person outside the territory, were they self isolate and when they received their diagnosis?

>> I will say that the person was following the direction they needed to follow and that is about all I can say.

I'm sorry.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Philippe, CBC?

Are you with us?

Perhaps we will move on and if Philippe joins us, we will go back.

Gabrielle, Whitehorse Star?

>> Reporter: Sorry, I think I heard Philippe come onto the line if he wants to ask a question, he can go ahead.

>> Pat: Okay.

Moving onto Laura, CBC?

Maybe CBC is having an issue.

Nothing?

>> Reporter: Sorry, Philippe is there.

>> Reporter: Yes, I am.

>> Pat: Okay.

Please go ahead, Philippe.

>> Reporter: Thank you.

The question for Dr Hanley.

You mentioned if things get worse any BC or elsewhere, more restrictions could follow in Yukon.

Do you have a set benchmark that you're looking at?

Is there a trigger or a certain number that would cause those conditions, or is there a standard you could point to of one that would happen?

>> So again, I will refer you to the criteria.

As outlined in the path forward.

That gives the categories of criteria.

That includes of course the travel importation risk.

In other words, what is the chance of someone infected with COVID actually coming across.

But then there are these five other criteria that are involved on -- ongoing community engagement, public health capacity, and adherence to public health measures.

They are not all things we can measure precisely, but each of those categories gives us an idea in a comfort level of how well we are doing.

And probably the single-- I was talking about this with the Minister earlier.

Probably the single most important piece of data might be, we are doing this really well.

We have done this really well through a time when BC cases were very low, but even through a time when BC cases have risen substantially.

So we know, and we predicted-- I actually expected to see more cases associated with the opening of you know, the relaxation of self quarantine.

And really, and that whole time, I think we have had two active cases in Yukon.

One of whom is a nonresident case.

So clearly, the whole concept has worked well because people are doing the right thing and people are by and large observing those measures.

And again, just to reiterate, these are government decisions based on public health assessment that comes from my advice, based on the looking and the analysis that we do on the team that I have.

>> Pat: Do you have a follow-up?

>> Reporter: I do not.

Thank you.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Laura, are you with us?

>> Reporter: I am.

>> Pat: Please go ahead.

>> Reporter: A question for Doctor Hanley.

After releasing these new guidelines last week, for when students and staff should stay home when they are sick, have you noticed a decrease in the numbers of students and staff who are absent from school or a decrease in the number of people and students getting tested for COVID?

It's a really.

>> Good question.

I don't have the data on the impact at.

Of course I'm very interested in that.

I think it may be too early to get too much of a sense just because people are getting used to it, but it is definitely something we will be following up.

In terms of testing numbers of kids, I would say-- I can't say enough to know that we have had a change because the numbers do fluctuate from day to day and week to week.

Of course that depends on so many things including accessibility of testing, the hours, -- the hours at the testing and assessment centre, and of course the prevalence of illness.

But these are definitely measures that we will be following, and also making available.

And clearly, we are interested in learning the impact and hopefully the reduced burden of unnecessary stays at home for otherwise transient, mild illness.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Next question?

>> Reporter: Thank you.

Last week, you mentioned that the schools are reopening and you're still working up some kinks.

Could you elaborate on what some of those kinks are and any other changes...

>> Well, yeah, I could probably say a few things.

I think it is really just getting used to the guidance in the operational plans for each school.

So, you know, how does classrooms facing work, how does the flow of children work.

This is really based just on things I have heard without really giving specific examples.

But I think it is just kind of learning, that all kind of adaption to new ways of behaving, whether it is playing on the playground or filing in and out of school, are getting onto a bus.

Just kind of those growing pains.

Of course, dealing with illness was something that, you know, we really wanted to respond to that as fairly as possible and develop that guidance, so I think that is hopefully kind of a game changer in making things more pragmatic.

We also had a call with the principles last week, with myself and the YCDC team to really go through, how is it going so far.

And answer a lot of questions, whether they were questions about, you know, spacing or questions about what happens if, you know, what if there is a case.

Questions about the traffic lights and the age distinctions between the two different traffic light guidances.

So I think there is clearly, they are really just getting comfortable about assessing by and large, things are going very well.

And kids and staff are settling in well.

>> Pat: Thank you.

We will go back to Gabrielle, Whitehorse Star.

>> Reporter: No questions, thank you.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Claudiane, Radio-Canada?

>> Reporter:

[Speaking French]

>> Interpreter: The question is for Dr Hanley.

Can you please repeat in French your guidelines for Halloween and the celebrations?

[Speaking French]

>> Pat:

[Speaking French]

>> Reporter:

[Speaking French]

>> Reporter: So it is fair to say then that the level of scrutiny, surveillance, will be going down at the borders, correct?

At the land borders?

And is there a saving of cost involved with that?

>> Well, thank you for the question.

I think first of all, I would not say I'm sure that there will be less scrutiny, because in some ways, we have been increasing our CEMA enforcement officers over the past month.

So maybe there is a bit of an offset there.

And I think also, the number of travellers is down.

We think there will be an increase at the airport, so we will increase the work at the airports.

Definitely, we are trying to adjust to the reality of travellers, and respond well maintaining the level of safety that we have had so far.

I think, at all times, we adjust, we assess, they respond.

So again, I would just like to say thank you to all those folks who have worked either in enforcement or information at all of our border points.

They have done a great job.

I think we will make sure that we are attaining a level of safety at all times and we will respond as necessary.

We think that this is the right level for travel that we are facing.

>> Pat: Thank you.

We will move now to Tim, CKRW.

>> Reporter: Good afternoon, Dr Hanley.

Thank you for clarifying Halloween for us.

You made a lot of kids happy, so thank you for that.

I appreciate that you can't divulge too much information about this latest case, but with some of the other cases online the public are wondering, or assuming it is from BC, or it is from-- not from BC, from elsewhere.

How come you don't feel that you need to divulge where this person is from, primarily to kind of quality public speculation?

>> Yeah...

It is a good question.

And I think we have to go back to our basic principles, and you know, communicating when we need to communicate public risk.

And really, that being the core purpose of doing that communication.

As well as, as much transparency as we can afford.

For instance, we felt we had an obligation to report the first hospitalized case.

Of course, we don't report, sake, cases of people hospitalized with influenza, except in the summary.

As a kind of periodic summary of our surveillance data.

But we don't kind of announced individual hospitalizations with other communicable diseases, or any other disease for that matter.

But noting that this is a significant event for Yukon, we felt that it was important to publicize thought.

But with respecting the confidentiality around any other details.

I think the same applies to jurisdiction -- to jurisdiction of origin.

I feel that that is not really within our right to divulge, at least four further potential of identifying individuals.

I think we have to be so extra careful in a small jurisdiction about what we say and what we don't say, and it can-- any amount of information can quickly add up to the potential for identify ability.

I think what tells us more-- again, if we talk about how well is our BC bubble working?

For instance, what problem are we trying to address?

The problem might be, is our BC bubble working well for us?

Is that opening up of Yukon society giving us benefits, and are we able to tolerate that risk?

That is the larger question, and I think that does not depend on whether an individual comes from BC or not.

I think it depends on how are we doing so far?

You know, what are the case totals that we have seen in the whole time we have had the BC bubble open?

That is where I go back to those tiny numbers of what we have actually witnessed.

So I think that, you know, there maybe a sense where withholding information, I like to think of it as we are doing our best to protect individuals, families, and communities, and we have always made that commitment.

But at the same time, to communicate as best as we can the risks to the public.

>> Pat: Go ahead.

>> Reporter: Just to try to follow on that question, I have just finished doing a round of community tours, sometimes virtual tours depending on what the community wishes.

And many of those visits, I did with the premier.

There is another side to this whole notion to your question about sharing information.

We have spoken with community individuals who have expressed to us their nervousness to go get tested one they feels that, and the reason is there is a real stigma attached with Avon being tested, and how a community perceives that.

This is why it is so important that number1, we be kind and gentle with each other and try to be respectful around the realities.

But it also speaks to what Dr Hanley is talking about, that information should only be shared at the level at which it is better for the community as a whole.

We worry-- that gives us a worry that...

That if we are so open with information, sometimes it can lead to people being fearful about even disclosing and we don't want anyone to be afraid to go get tested.

So I think it is natural that everyone wants to understand these pieces of information.

The challenge is we need to make sure we are doing it and a way that is protecting the overall health and well-being of the community.

>> Pat: Thank you, Minister Streicker.

Tim, follow-up?

>> Reporter: Yes.

Just wanted to ask you, you talked about contact tracing with this case.

And actually I was having a bit of a discussion on Twitter with someone last week about it.

Can you go through the parameters of what you do for contact tracing, and I know I have the app on my phone, the national app.

Are you feeding information to that up?

Can you take us through that process?

>> Am I on?

Yeah.

Thanks.

I can try to do that as fast as I can, the real experts of that of course are the community nurses in YCDC nurses that do this every day and it literally is their bread and butter.

But really, it is a risk assessment process.

It is actually interviewing the individual who is sick with whatever disease it is, whether this is a sexually transmitted infection or whether it is tuberculosis, you know, or any other communicable disease without break potential that we trace, and COVID of course the newest entry into that category.

So it is, you know, tell us about your last few days.

We go back two days before symptom onset, to give that kind of buffer of the potential for transmission during that presymptomatic time.

We go back 48 hours and then go over, you know, where were you, who were you with.

Of course, the family, if there is a family, they are usually the immediate contact.

And then it is assessing, what was thought contact likely where these household contacts where you're sharing food, sharing space?

Or was this a work conduct?

If it was a work contact, or workplace rules in place?

Was their actual contact, or was at a workplace that has everything set up, COVID protocols in place so in fact there was no significant contact?

We go over the places where the person has been.

Were they around town, were they in certain settings?

Of course, you have seen with the notifications that-- the previous public notifications.

Was there a certain church for a certain shop, or store where there was a potential, say, I was in the such and such a store for 45 minutes and there were perhaps numerous interactions within that, then that might be something we say, that is a higher risk interaction.

Versus stopping at the gas station for five minutes with no significant interaction with people.

So all of those contacts, whether close, household, family, friend, those layers of contacts are part of the assessment for risks.

Sometimes but can be handled in a few minutes in one interview.

Sometimes it takes going back and asking someone else.

It might be asking the spouse or the partner, or the parents, or they sons or daughters.

Sometimes it requires actually several interviews to get all of the information, to go back.

It can be a process that takes hours to days and of course, there are the symptoms.

Or other symptoms not associated?

So testing contacts with symptoms and of course having them self isolate until we get the test results if they are symptomatic.

So it is going through all of that and really packaging that into a story.

So what is the story?

What do we need, if we need to notify and what do we need to do?

Regarding the app, it is still not easy for us to determine the place of the app in our practice.

We are certainly watching with interest how other jurisdictions are picking this up, how it is being used in Ontario and Newfoundland and really watching to see...

It is not clear what additional role and app will play in a small jurisdiction like ours because we tend to have good capacity to contact tracing.

We have, I would say we have substantial expertise in contact tracing, and we know people.

We know where to find people in a small jurisdiction.

So it tends to go more quickly and smoothly in the smaller jurisdiction.

Some of the additional place of an app, where really an app if the intent of the app is followed, so a person has the app and is diagnosed positive for COVID and then chooses to upload that information, then of course it is contacts identified through cell phone interaction.

But it is difficult to tell through those what is the significance of those contacts.

So does it add useful information or not, I think is still the big question we have not answered.

We are looking forward to really the experience of other jurisdictions to be able to inform our approach.

>> Pat: I would like to thank everyone for their time today.

Beginning on Wednesday, October 7th, hour COVID-19 updates will take place at 11:00 AM so as not to conflict with the sitting of the Yukon legislature.

That is Wednesday, October 7th, at 11:00 AM.