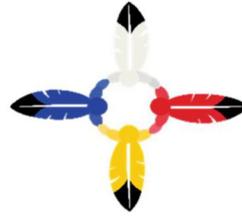




Assembly of  
Manitoba Chiefs



Manitoba Keewatinowî  
Okimakanak



First Nations Health and  
Social Secretariat  
of Manitoba

## Manitoba First Nations COVID-19 Pandemic Response Coordination Team PRCT BULLETIN

October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

Given the recent rise the number of cases and the province moving to orange zone, it is recommended that:

- Be cautious with and if possible, delay travel to/ from regions of the province designated as Orange (Restricted) or Red (Critical) risk levels. This includes Winnipeg and the surrounding Metropolitan area currently.
- For communities that have significant connections to Winnipeg for medical appointments or other travel, consider reviewing and enacting the Orange Alert Level in the Manitoba First Nations COVID-19 Alert Levels (<https://manitobachiefs.com/wp-content/uploads/PRCT-MB-First-Nations-COVID-Alert-Levels.pdf>).

	October 2, 2020 (% of Provincial totals)	On-reserve	Off-reserve
<b>New Cases</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>95 (4.6%)</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Active Cases</b>	<b>61 (28%)</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Current Hospitalizations</b>	<b>5 (33%)</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>FN Test Positivity Rate</b>	<b>1.74%</b>		
<b>New Tests</b>	<b>699</b>		
<b>Total Tests</b>	<b>19854 (10.6%)</b>		

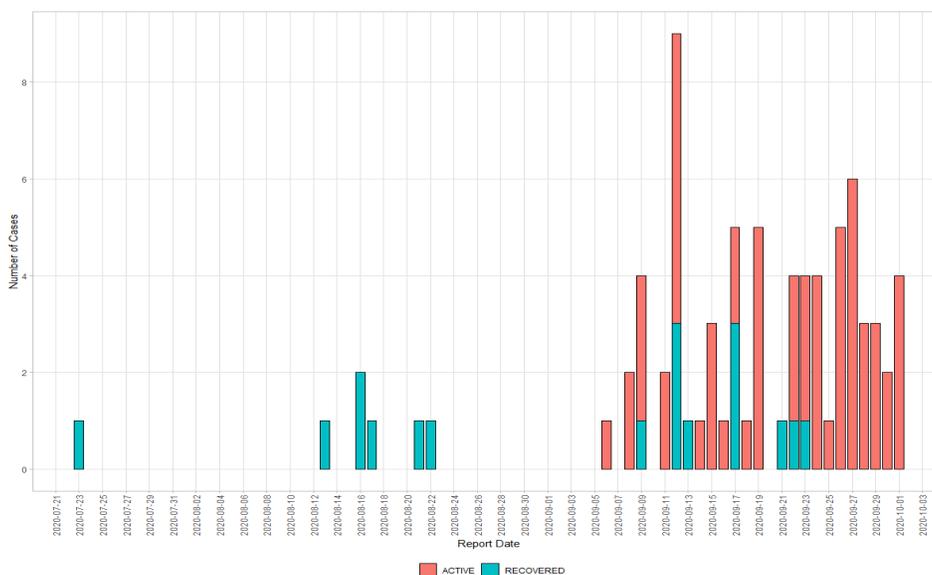
The Manitoba First Nations COVID-19 Pandemic Response Coordination Team advise that, since the **September 28th bulletin, twelve (12) new First Nations COVID-19 cases were identified as of 7:00 am, Friday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>**. The total number of lab-confirmed positive and probable positive First Nations cases in Manitoba has increased by **12**, taking the total to **95** cases. **66** cases are off-reserve and **29** cases are on-reserve. The total number of recovered cases are now **34** and active cases are **61**.

#### Details of the 12 new First Nations cases:

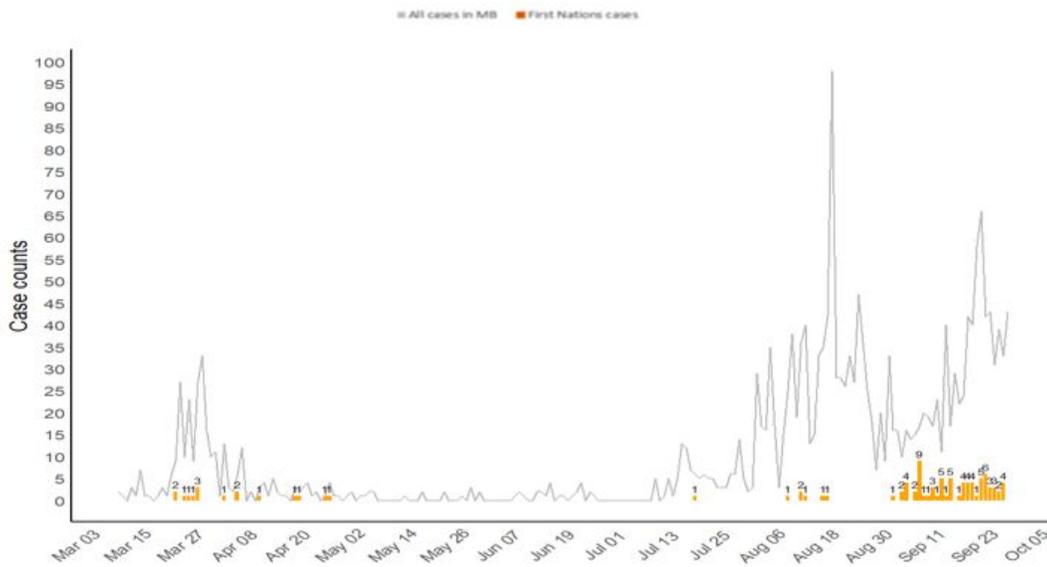
- **2** cases are in NRHA, **5** are in IERHA, **5** are in WRHA
- 1 is close contact of a known case and rest are all under investigation in terms of identifying the potential acquisition.

#### Details of the 95 First Nations cases:

- **57** people in Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA)
- **20** people in the Interlake Eastern Regional Health Authority (IERHA)
- **2** people in the Southern Health-Santé Sud (SHSS)
- **4** people in the Prairie Mountain Regional Health Authority (PMH)
- **12** people in the Northern Regional Health Authority (NRHA)
- The number of recovered cases is **34**
- The number of currently hospitalized cases is **5**
- The number of deaths among First Nations people due to COVID-19 is **0**.
- **59** females and **36** males
- The age range of positive people: **1-86**
- The most commonly reported age group of infected individuals is **60-69** (in comparison to 20-29 for other Manitobans)
- Travel-acquired cases: **9%** (in comparison to **13%** for other Manitobans)
- Acquisition through contact with a known positive case: **72%** (in comparison to **68%** for other Manitobans)
- Average time from symptom onset until testing: **4 days** (same as the rest of MB)
- **45%** of cases reported the presence of an underlying illness (in comparison to **32%** for the rest of MB)



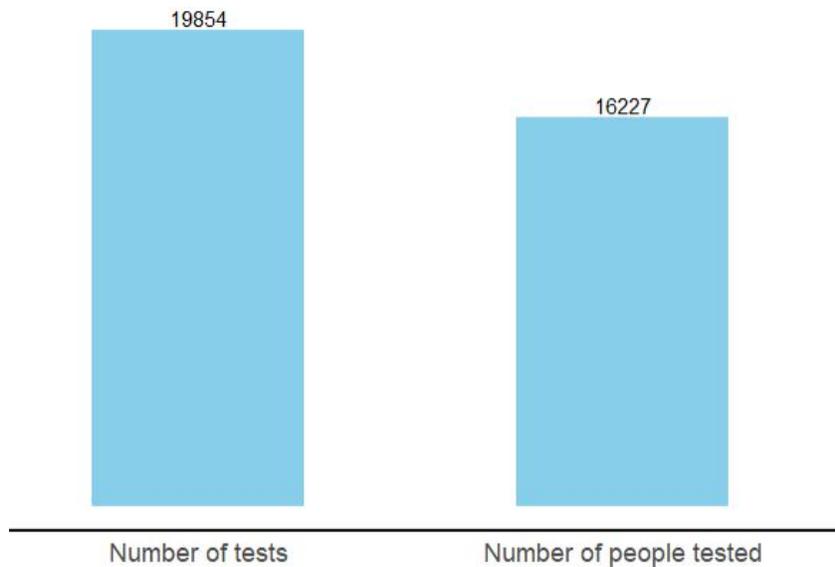
**Figure 1. Epidemiologic curve – First Nations cases**



**Figure 2. Number of First Nations cases in Manitoba**

**First Nation Testing**

As of October 2nd, 2020, the number of First Nations COVID-19 tests has risen by 699, for a total of 19854 tests conducted for First Nations across Manitoba since the pandemic began. Current 5-day COVID-19 test positivity rate in Manitoba First Nations is 1.74% which is lower than Manitoba’s 5-day test positivity rate of 2.57%. For First Nations the average test number per person tested is 1.22, which is higher than the overall testing rate in Manitoba, at 1.17 tests/person tested.



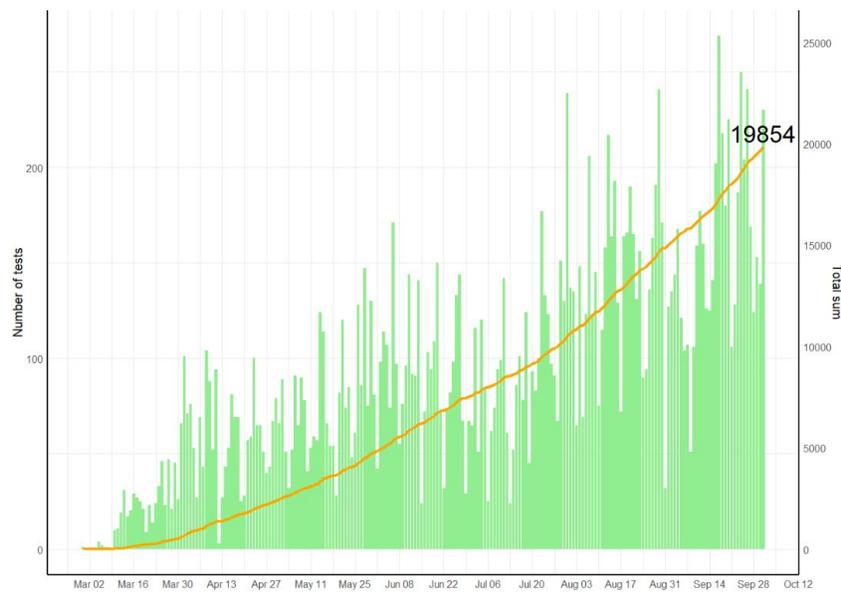
**Figure 3. Number of tests performed, and number of people tested.**

The total number of tests in First Nations represents 11% of the overall tests done in Manitoba; testing numbers are highest in hospital, particularly in Winnipeg; the main sources of test samples excluding Winnipeg were from nursing stations.

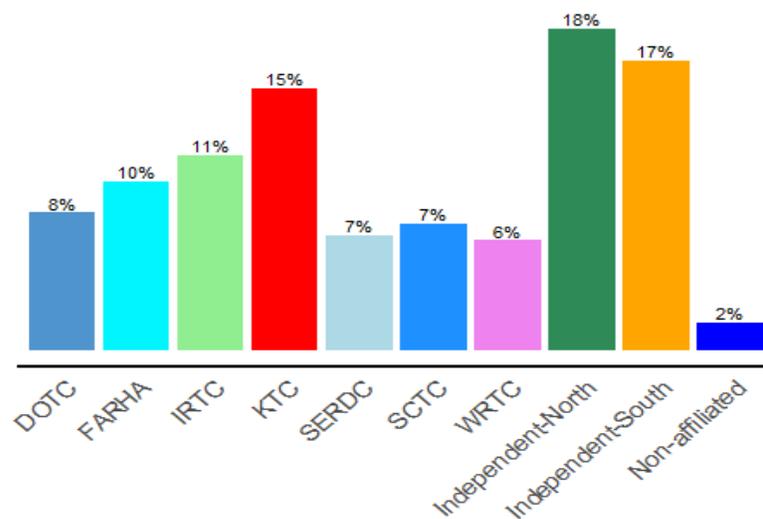
- Asymptomatic surveillance has yet to identify any First Nations cases.
- Except in the very young, testing rates are higher in women, 59% overall. This mirrors the provincial testing trends where there are also more women who are being tested at 56%.
- A total of 16,227 First Nations people have been tested to date. Of those, 60% of tests were completed for First Nations who live on reserve and 40% of tests were completed for First Nations who live in urban or rural areas.

Unlike the majority of cases in Manitoba, First Nations people are most likely to be infected through close contact to a known case of COVID-19.

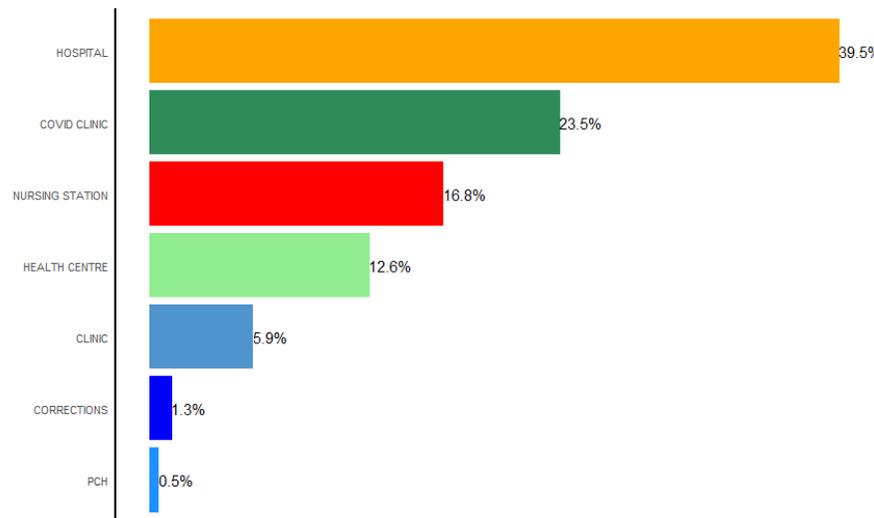
**Below are some of the testing trends noted for First Nations individuals.**



**Figure 4. Epidemic curve of First Nations testing in Manitoba.**



**Figure 5. Number of people tested for COVID-19 by Tribal Council region of home community.**



**Figure 6. Test sampling by type of site.**

### First Nation Contacts

- 300 First Nations have been named as contacts over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic
- 72% of COVID-19 infections were a result of close contact to a positive COVID-19 case
- 40 (as of September 28<sup>th</sup>) cases can be linked to clusters or outbreaks

### Discussion

The epidemiological curve for COVID-19 in First Nations people in Manitoba is showing an ongoing concerning trend. Our families and connections across communities are a strength in many respects, but when it comes to COVID-19 the mobility and these connections can be a risk for spread. We continue to be very concerned about the number of cases occurring in the 60-69 year old age group and the increasing number of First Nations people in hospital with COVID-19.

We are seeing a large cluster of cases with connections across communities related to traveling and visiting family, among other things. We also know that people often come to Winnipeg for a variety of reasons including visiting, shopping, and entertainment. There have been a growing number of cases and many more potential public exposures in restaurants, bars, casinos and shopping centers reported in the last couple of weeks. In order to respond to our current situation, we need to be much more careful about the risk of being exposed to COVID-19 in Winnipeg, and then the potential of bringing it back to our communities when we return. We need to be more cautious with non-essential travel to keep the risks lower for people who need to travel, for example for medical appointments.

At this time, PRCT encourages the following actions:

- If travel to an Orange zone is necessary, keep the number of people traveling as low as possible and be diligent with physical distancing and hand hygiene and follow all measures such as mandatory non-medical masks that are in place.
- If you have family who live in other communities/ areas from you, consider ways to connect that are lower risk for spreading COVID-19:
  - Connect by phone or other social media platforms.
  - Only travel to visit in vehicles with people who live in your household.
  - Visit outside as much as possible.
  - Avoid sharing food/ serving dishes/ utensils/ condiments.

- If you are visiting older relatives, limit your visiting with others, attendance at gatherings, and possibilities for public exposures prior to your visit so that you don't unintentionally expose your relatives to COVID-19.
- Practice physical distancing measures and stay 2m/ 6ft away from people who are outside of your household.
- Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer.
- Regularly clean commonly touched surfaces such as door handles and countertops.
- Wear non-medical masks when you are in places where physical distancing cannot be maintained (e.g. crowded stores or when using public/ community transportation services).
- Follow gathering size orders. At this time we encourage communities to consider lowering any gatherings to 10 people whether indoors or outdoors.
- Consider postponing any large gatherings or reducing the numbers who attend in person.
- Stay home and self-isolate if you have any new symptoms that could be from COVID-19, no matter how mild the symptoms are.
- Present for testing if your symptoms last for more than 24 hours.

You can access testing by calling the health facility in your community, going to the RHA testing site closest to you, calling your health care provider, or use the Screening Tool available here <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/> to find out when/ where you can be tested.

#### **COVID-19 resources and links:**

##### ***Manitoba First Nations COVID-19 Alert Levels***

<https://manitobachiefs.com/wp-content/uploads/PRCT-MB-First-Nations-COVID-Alert-Levels.pdf>

##### ***School Division Reopening Plans***

<http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/restoring/school-divisions.html>

##### ***Restoring Safe Schools: August 13 - School Settings Practice Guidance and Protocols***

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/rss-practice-guidance.html>

##### ***Applying Current Public Health Orders and Guidance to Community Events***

<https://manitobachiefs.com/wp-content/uploads/PRCT-GUIDE-Applying-Current-Public-Health-Orders-and-Guidance-to-Community-Events-29May2020-FINALasof459pm.pdf>

##### ***Public Health Considerations During COVID-19 for Sundance Leaders***

[https://d5d8ad59-8391-4802-9f0a-f5f5d600d7e9.filesusr.com/ugd/38252a\\_de8caedd52c5409e9607394c383c7929.pdf?index=true](https://d5d8ad59-8391-4802-9f0a-f5f5d600d7e9.filesusr.com/ugd/38252a_de8caedd52c5409e9607394c383c7929.pdf?index=true)

##### ***Manitoba government COVID-19 information***

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/>

**Please visit any of the following websites for more information and resources on COVID-19**

[www.manitobachiefs.com](http://www.manitobachiefs.com) [www.scoinc.mb.ca](http://www.scoinc.mb.ca) [www.mkonation.com](http://www.mkonation.com) [www.fnhssm.com](http://www.fnhssm.com)