



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 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Given the ongoing concerning rise in cases in Manitoba and the escalated restrictions in the Winnipeg Metropolitan Area effective Monday, October 19<sup>th</sup> and restrictions beginning October 26<sup>th</sup> in NRHA:

- We strongly encourage cancelling non-essential travel to Orange (Restricted) or Red (Critical) risk levels. This includes the Winnipeg Metropolitan Area and the NRHA.
- We strongly encourage all First Nations Community move to 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>). In particular, we strongly encourage all communities to enact gathering size limits of 10 people (5 in the NRHA), including for funerals.
- We strongly encourage limiting close contacts outside of the home for all First Nations people.

	<b>October 26, 2020 (% of Provincial totals)</b>	<b>On-reserve</b>	<b>Off-reserve</b>
<b>New Cases</b>	<b>64</b>	-	-
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>513 (12.1%)</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>318</b>
<b>Active Cases</b>	<b>378 (18.4%)</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>256</b>
<b>FN Test Positivity Rate</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	-	-
<b>New Tests</b>	<b>880</b>	-	-
<b>Total Tests</b>	<b>26672 (11%)</b>	-	-

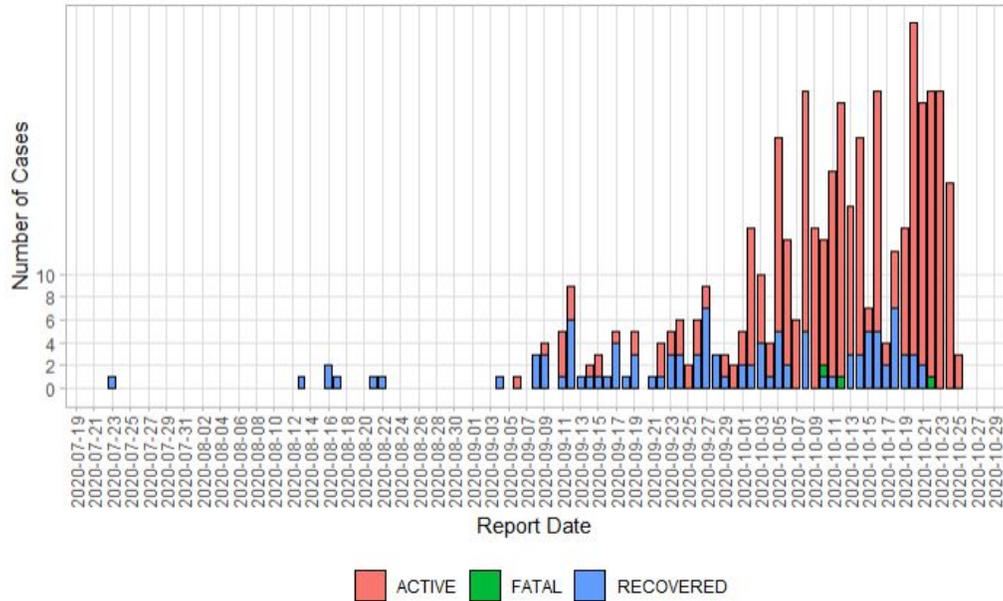
<b>First Nations Covid-19 hospitalizations</b>		
	<b>Current</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Hospitalizations Total (Males/Females)</b>	<b>16 (7/9)</b>	<b>50 (25/25)</b>
<b>Age Range</b>	<b>16 - 82</b>	<b>14 - 88</b>
<b>Median Age</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Total ICU (Males/Females)</b>	<b>2 (1/1)</b>	<b>14 (10/4)</b>
<b>ICU - Age Range</b>	<b>66-82</b>	<b>20 - 82</b>
<b>ICU - Median Age</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>51</b>

The Manitoba First Nations COVID-19 Pandemic Response Coordination Team advise that, since the **October 23rd bulletin, sixty four (64) new First Nations COVID-19 cases were identified as of 7:00 am Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup>**. The total number of lab-confirmed positive and probable positive First Nations cases in Manitoba has increased by **64**, taking the total to **513** cases. Of the total cases, **318** cases are off-reserve and **195** cases are on-reserve. The total number of recovered cases are now **132**, there have been 3 deaths, and 378 cases are considered active. As of **4pm October 25th**, according to information received from FNIHB there were **122** active cases on reserve.

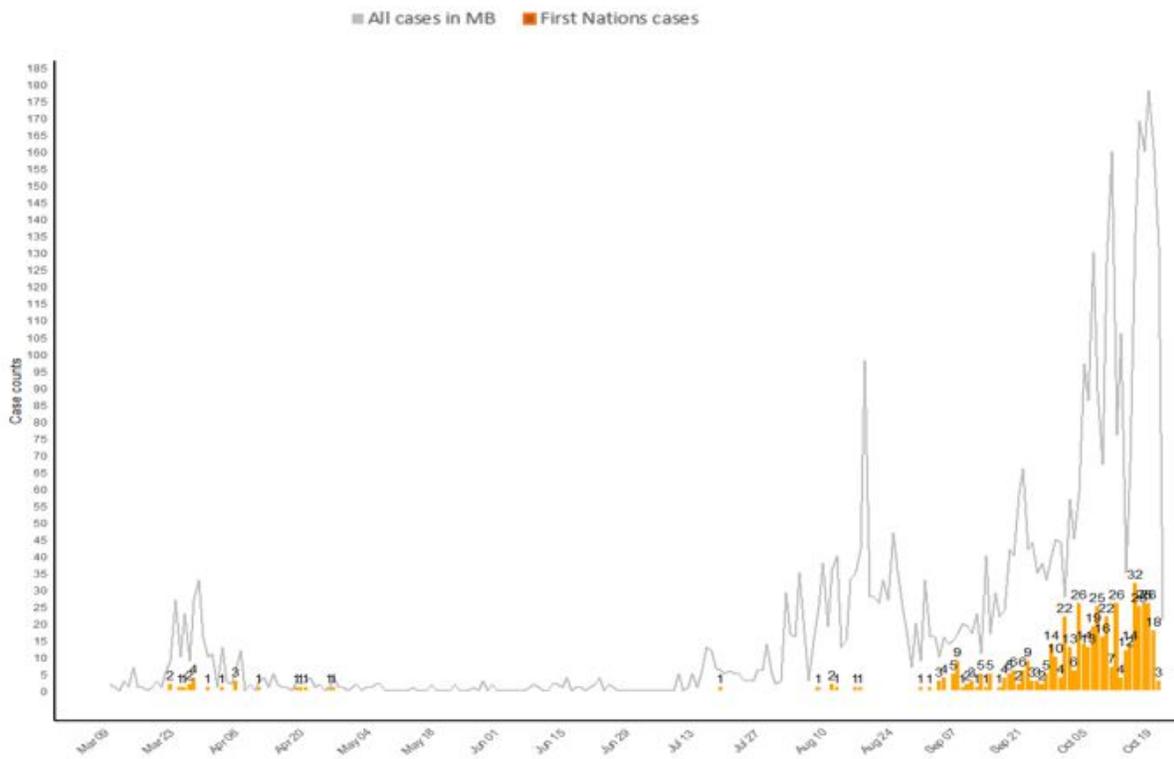
#### **Details of the 513 First Nations cases:**

- **228** people in Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA)
- **156** people in the Interlake Eastern Regional Health Authority (IERHA)
- **33** people in the Southern Health-Santé Sud (SHSS)
- **12** people in the Prairie Mountain Regional Health Authority (PMH)
- **83** people in the Northern Regional Health Authority (NRHA)
- **1** case where the region of residence is pending
- The number of recovered cases is **132**
- The number of currently hospitalized cases is **16**. **This is 20.8% of all hospitalizations in the province currently.**
- **The number of First Nations people in the ICU due to COVID-19 is 2. This is 13.3% of all COVID-19 ICU admissions currently.**
- The number of deaths among First Nations people due to COVID-19 is **now 3, as another death has been reported. The person who passed away was in their 50s and a resident of the WRHA.**
- **261** females and **252** males
- The age range of positive people: **1-88**
- The most commonly reported age group of infected individuals is **20-29** (same as the rest of MB)

- Travel-acquired cases: **4%** (in comparison to **8%** for other Manitobans)
- Acquisition through contact with a known positive case: **70%** (in comparison to **67%** for other Manitobans)
- Average time from symptom onset until testing: **3 days** (same as the rest of MB)
- **47%** of cases reported the presence of an underlying illness (in comparison to **37%** for the rest of MB)



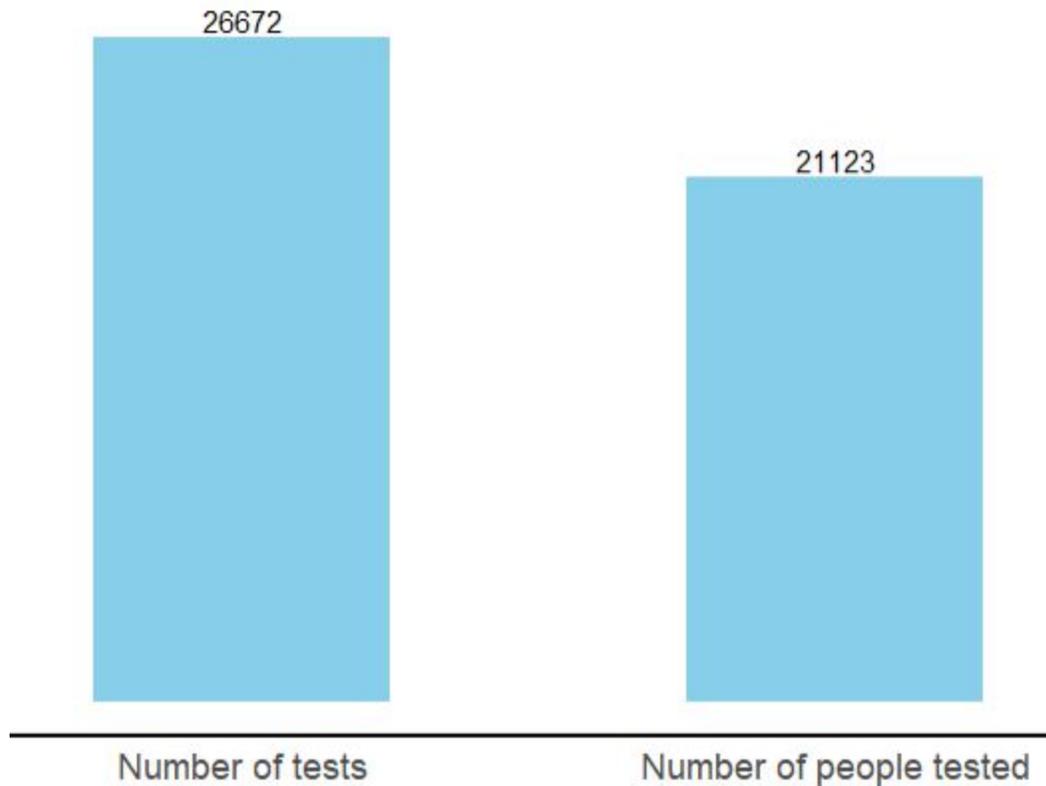
**Figure 1. Epidemiologic curve – First Nations cases**



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

## First Nation Testing

As of October 26th, 2020, the number of First Nations COVID-19 tests has risen by 880, for a total of 26672 tests conducted for First Nations across Manitoba since the pandemic began. The 5-day COVID-19 test positivity rate in Manitoba First Nations is **5.6%** which is lower than Manitoba's current 5-day test positivity rate of 6.9%.



*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 21123 First Nations people have been tested to date. Of those, 59% of tests were completed for First Nations who live on reserve and 41% 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.

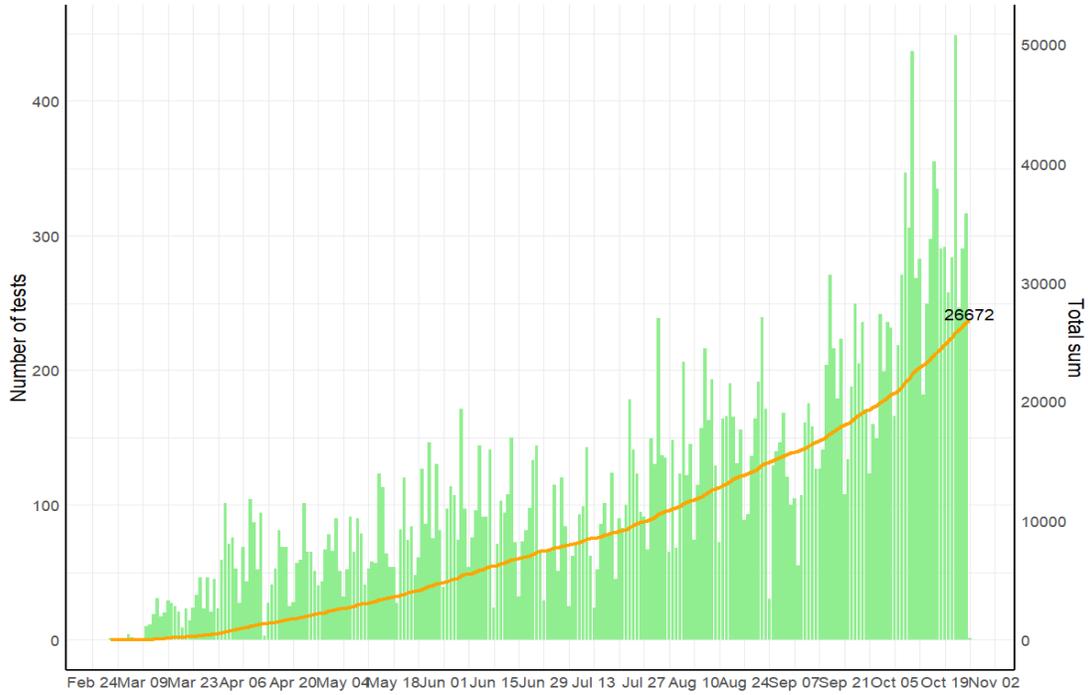


Figure 4. Epidemic curve of First Nations testing in Manitoba.

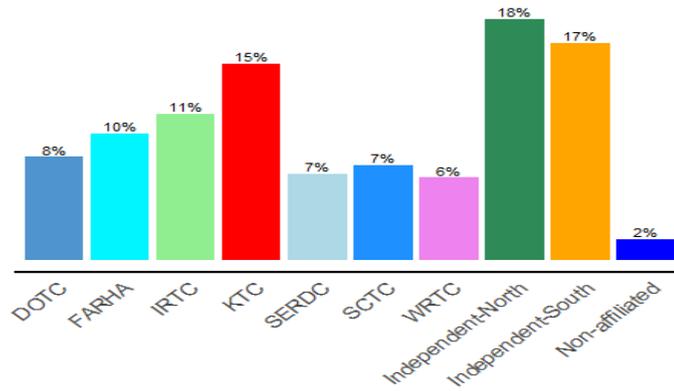


Figure 5. Number of people tested for COVID-19 by Tribal Council region of home community.

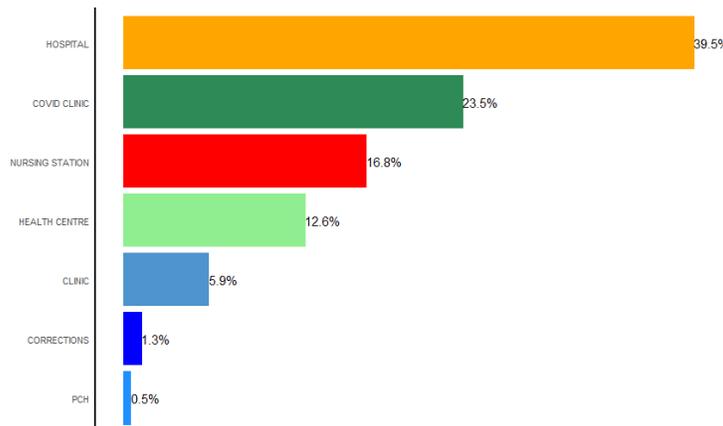


Figure 6. Test sampling by type of site.

## First Nation Contacts

- Of completed investigations currently available in PHIMS, there are 1012 First Nations people that have been named as contacts over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic
- 70% of COVID-19 infections were a result of close contact to a positive COVID-19 case

## Discussion

The epidemiological curve for COVID-19 in First Nations people in Manitoba is showing an ongoing very concerning trend with high test positivity rate (5.6%), and an increasing number of First Nations communities with cases. As of October 25th, 22 First Nations communities have had cases, and 17 First Nations communities have active cases.

We continue to see new cases that are related to traveling, visiting family, and attending gatherings. In the past week there have been several public bulletins related to exposures at funerals in First Nations communities. While we recognize the importance of the grieving process and supporting the family of one who has passed on, funerals are high risk events for passing on COVID-19 and so we strongly encourage limiting in-person attendance and finding other ways to support the family of one who has passed. MFNPRCT had previously developed guidance for funerals, and it is available at [https://manitobachiefs.com/wp-content/uploads/PRCT-Poster-Funeral\\_Info-FINAL-04.08.2020.png](https://manitobachiefs.com/wp-content/uploads/PRCT-Poster-Funeral_Info-FINAL-04.08.2020.png).

As Winnipeg has continued to have high new case numbers, on Monday October 19<sup>th</sup> public health measures were further strengthened including limiting gathering sizes to 5 people. Northern RHA also moved to the Orange Alert Level on Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup> and now has the same restrictions as Winnipeg, including the gathering size limit of 5 people.

We strongly encourage all First Nations communities in Manitoba to move to the Orange Alert Level and in particular to limit gathering sizes (including for wedding and funerals) to 10 people. Please note that in the NRHA effective October 26<sup>th</sup> gathering size limits will be 5. In addition, we encourage that all communities review their in-community isolation plans and their business continuity plans in the event that essential staff have to self-isolate if they are cases or are named as close contacts.

At this time, PRCT encourages the following actions:

- Cancel or postpone non-essential travel to areas of the province that are in Orange or Red levels on the Pandemic Response System, including the Winnipeg Metropolitan Area and the Northern RHA.
- Limit gathering sizes in all communities to 10 people, and 5 for communities in the Northern RHA.
- Limit close contacts outside of the household. This is very important for reducing transmission of COVID-19.
- If you have family who live in other communities/ areas from you, consider ways to connect that are lower risk for spreading COVID-19, such as connecting by phone, social media or other virtual platforms.
- 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
- 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)