

Community Update – April 8, 2021

Emerging Wisely Current State: Relaxing Phase 2 – Next Steps

Alberta Precision Laboratories has notified the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer (OCPHO) that two recently announced COVID-19 infections have been identified as a Variant of Concern.

They include a confirmed infection announced on April 3 in an out-of-territory worker at Diavik Diamond Mine, and one announced on April 5 in an NWT resident that was related to international travel.

Lab analysis confirmed the virus in both cases is the B.1.1.7 variant, which was first identified in the United Kingdom. On April 1, the first confirmed COVID-19 infection in the Northwest Territories was identified as the B.1.1.7 variant in an out-of-territory worker at Diavik Diamond Mine.

The individuals and identified contacts are currently self-isolating and doing well.

There is no identified risk to the public related to these infections at this time. The introduction of a Variant of Concern into the NWT is a new development in the pandemic, and we must be vigilant in our response to this. Monitoring and investigation will continue per public health communicable disease protocols to mitigate any transmission risk.

While the new COVID-19 Variants of Concern seem to spread more easily than the original virus, the same types of preventive strategies will be effective.

There is strong evidence that the Moderna vaccine is very protective against the B.1.1.7 variant. Protect yourself and your community by practicing these healthy habits every day:

- Keep physical distance of at least two metres (or six feet).
- Wash or sanitize your hands frequently, especially if touching your face.
- Wear a mask when keeping distance is tough.
- Keep crowds small and spaces large.
- Stay home if you're sick, even if your symptoms are mild.
- Call your healthcare provider if you have any symptoms of COVID-19. • Self-isolate responsibly whenever required.

The OCPHO anticipated it would see Variants of Concern, such as B.1.1.7, at some point in the NWT and it is prepared to handle them. We can all lower the risk of transmitting COVID-19 by following healthy habits.

For further information please contact the Town Office at 587-3700 during our business hours of 8:30AM – 5:00PM. You may also email us at towninformation@normanwells.com.