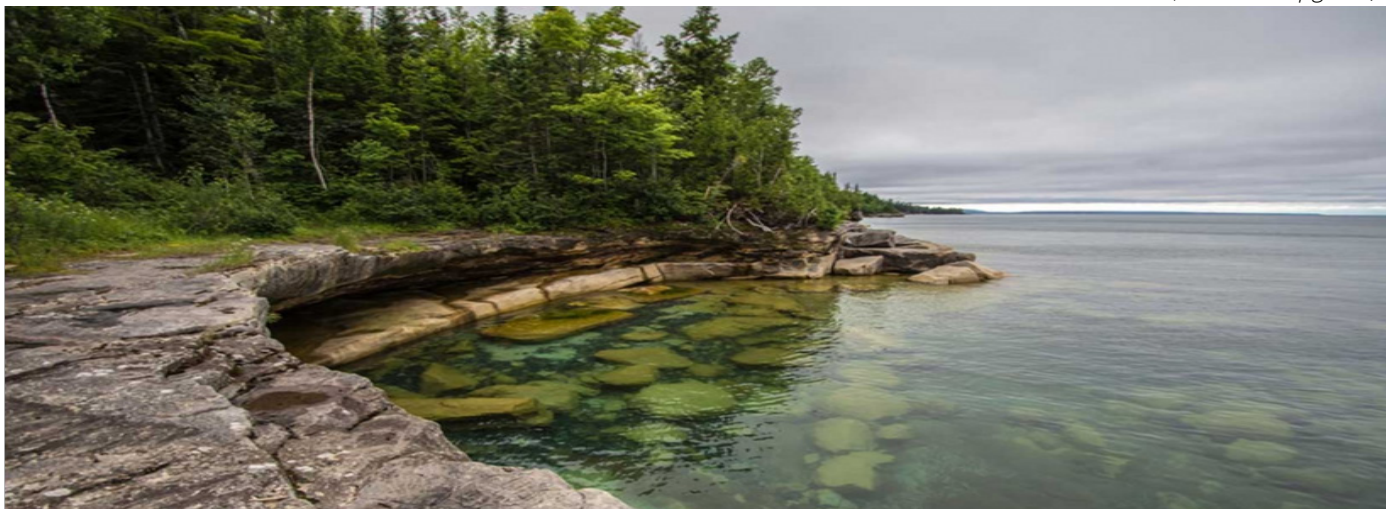


# Health Newsletter



**On February 17, 2021 Kids Help Phone will launch Brighter Days:** An Indigenous Wellness Program. The Ontario Ministry of Health has funding for 58 sessions of the program for First Nations youth in Ontario however the sessions must be delivered by **March 31, 2021**

*(continued: pg. 4-5)*



## HIGHLIGHTS

### Message from Health Director

### Public Health Highlights:

- COVID-19 Rapid Response Testing
- COVID-19 Indigenous Vaccine Rollout Update

### Research Highlights:

- Weekly Testing

### Community Wellness

- Self-Care during COVID-19

### Mental Health Highlights:

- BRIGHTER DAYS: An Indigenous Wellness Program by Kids Help Phone
- ONTARIO HEALTH: Supporting Virtual Care Access Within First Nations Communities

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### January 28, 2021

**COVID-19 Speaker Series: Surveillance of COVID-19 through wastewater testing with Dr. James Brooks (PHAC)**

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/94016283258>  
Meeting ID: 940 1628 3258

One tap mobile: 8557038985, 94016283258#  
Canada Toll-free: 855 703 8985

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/aqRRK1xi2>

### February 17, 2021

**Regional Ontario First Nation Health Director/Community Health Director Provider Call: Meeting happens every 3rd Wednesday, Stay tuned for details.**

**CHIEFS OF ONTARIO  
15<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL HEALTH FORUM  
FEBRUARY 23-24-25, 2021**

# The past eleven months...

## Pandemic Journey



Carmen R. Jones  
COO Health Director

Our world has certainly changed since March 2020. You as front line community health workers have been leading the response to the COVID-19 Pandemic in each of your First Nations communities. The Chiefs of Ontario Health Secretariat is here to support you in any way possible as we work through all of the uncertainties together. We will continue to host our monthly Regional Health Directors call where information will be shared from First Nation organizations, Provincial, Federal health partners as well as subject matter experts on issues of COVID-19. As well we hope to continue this newsletter on a monthly basis to share what we have heard from you on our calls, and answer some of your questions and concerns as well as topics of interest related to the pandemic.

We applaud all of the frontline primary health, public health and health professionals, service providers and others who are helping to assist community members during this challenging time. Thank you for your tireless efforts.

**Sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Jones', written over a light blue horizontal line.

# PUBLIC HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

## COVID-19 Rapid Response Testing

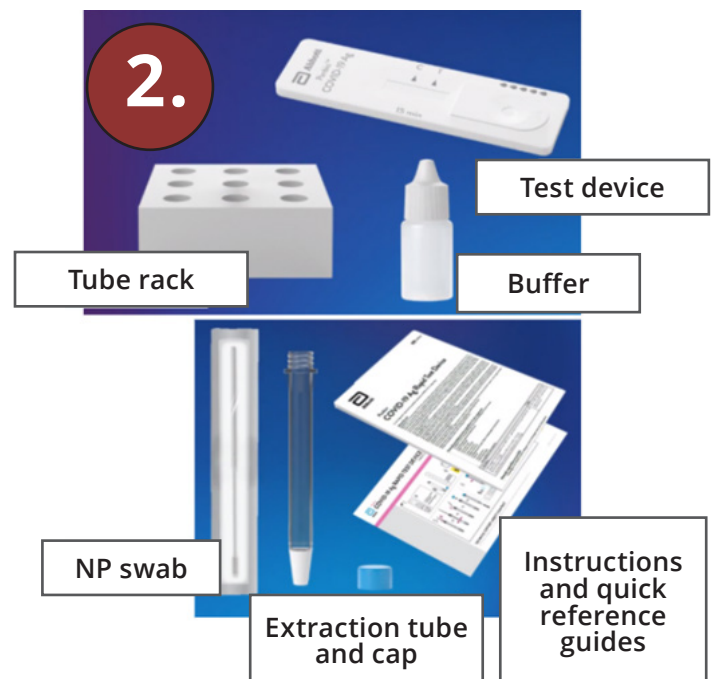
Ontario Health: Health Directors Call: January 20th, 2021

Ontario Health Lead Katrina Podolak and Team Lead Ryan Emond presented on Rapid Response Testing:

**1. ID Now:** This test uses molecular testing with a nasal, nasopharyngeal or throat swab. Molecular testing detects genetic material of COVID-19 to diagnose people with symptoms. ID NOW tests have initially been used in hospitals and assessment centres in rural and remote communities, as well as to test people as part of early outbreak investigations in hotspot regions where there are high concentrations of COVID-19 cases. The ID Now is small and portable technology with a fast 15 minute test result turnaround time. It is slightly less accurate compared to PCR Lab Testing however.



**2. Panbio:** The Panbio test uses antigen testing with a nasopharyngeal swab only. Antigen testing detects specific proteins from the virus to screen and identify people who need further testing. Test turnaround time is between 15-20 minutes. To date the Panbio rapid antigen tests have been used to support screening programs in long term care facilities and other workplaces.



If you think your community would be interested in learning more about these rapid response tests contact Ryan Emond at: [ryan.emond@ontariohealth.ca](mailto:ryan.emond@ontariohealth.ca) and an information session can be scheduled. **Please note that Rapid Response Tests are NOT a replacement for either the "gold standard" lab based PCR testing OR good public health measures.**

For a link to the full presentation on Rapid Response Testing please visit COO-COVID-19 Website at:

<https://www.coo-covid19.com/>

# COVID-19

## Indigenous Vaccine Rollout Update

Communications Report on behalf of: Ministry of Indigenous Affairs: January 13th 2021

The COVID-19 vaccine rollout is a large undertaking for the province of Ontario and our objective is to keep all Ontarians healthy and safe. We are committed to providing you with updates about the latest rollout developments as information becomes available.

Dedicated engagement with Indigenous communities, organizations and health service providers is essential to ensuring an effective and culturally appropriate approach to the vaccination rollout.

We have established First Nations and Urban Indigenous Sub-tables under the Vaccine Distribution Task Force to more broadly engage and partner, and to inform planning with leadership in Indigenous communities.

We are sharing the following key messages and attaching a fact sheet produced by the Ministry of Health that will hopefully begin addressing any questions or concerns your community members may have, which you may wish to consider disseminating through your communications channels.

We look forward to keeping you updated as vaccine rollout planning progresses. You may also access up-to-date information at: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-vaccines-ontario>

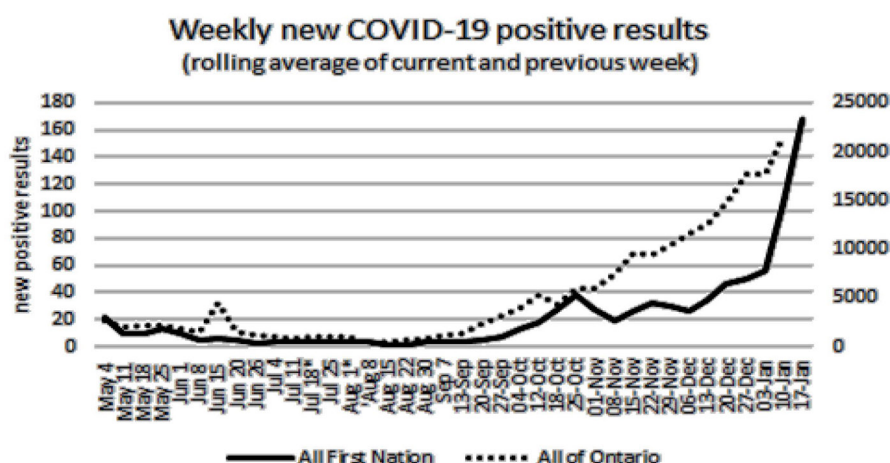
For complete presentation go to: <https://bit.ly/3qAQkNc>

## COVID-19 Research Highlights

Each week, the Chiefs of Ontario Health sector reports the numbers of COVID-19 tests and the % that are positive among Ontario First Nations. Data are reported at a sub-region level but community-level data are not available. These reports, produced in collaboration with ICES, are posted here <https://www.coo-covid19.com/news> no later than Thursday afternoon each week.

An example of the charts in each week's report is included below. It shows the rolling two-week average of new COVID-19 positive test results among FN increased dramatically for the second week in a row.

For more information, contact Dr. Carol Mulder at: [carol.mulder@coo.org](mailto:carol.mulder@coo.org)



## Community Wellness

# Self-Care: During COVID-19

During these stressful times during COVID-19 it is easy to forget about self-care. In order to care for others we must ensure we first care for one-self. Here are some general suggestions on self-care:

- Write in a journal
- Volunteer for a cause meaningful to you
- Make a gratitude list
- Take a fresh air break, meditate or listen to guided visualization
- Cuddle with pets or treat yourself to a nice meal
- Take a nap or listen to music
- Practice yoga, lay in the grass or snow
- Photography
- Read a good book
- Write a blog
- Spend time outdoors, if possible
- Go for a drive or exercise
- Join an online social club or listen to enjoyable podcasts or videos
- Turn off electronic devices or have a movie marathon
- Play a game or dance
- Wear something that makes you feel confident
- Join an online support group
- Have a virtual game night with friends
- Work in the garden
- Get creative: draw, paint, write a song or cook a new meal
- Try a new hobby or have an adventure day
- Spend time with your children – read to them, listen to their laughter, play with them, etc.
- Create a poster with images of a positive vision
- Nutrition – increase healthy food choices.



More information on Self Care, please visit: [https://theworkingmind.ca/sites/default/files/twm\\_self-care-resilience-guide.pdf](https://theworkingmind.ca/sites/default/files/twm_self-care-resilience-guide.pdf)

Crisis support please call the Canada Suicide Prevention Helpline: 1-833-456-4566

For more information on Mental Health and Addiction resources go the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) website: <https://www.camh.ca/>

# MENTAL HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

## Brighter Days:

An Indigenous Wellness Program by  
Kids Help Phone

## Kids Help Phone

Brighter Days: An Indigenous Wellness Program by Kids Help Phone was developed by Indigenous experts to empower First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth with skills, tools and resources to support their well-being. The program is offered to any group of Indigenous youth from eight to 29 years old in both audio and video format.

Groups begin with an introductory session, featuring a video of former NHL player Jordin Tootoo, that demystifies Kids Help Phone services and encourages help-seeking behaviours. Groups then have the option of selecting additional sessions based on the priorities of their community. Each session module is focused on a different wellness topic such as healthy relationships, coping with anxiety, substance use, online safety and more.

All Brighter Days sessions begin with a video introduction featuring a trusted Indigenous mentor followed by a culturally-safe and engaging session with a Kids Help Phone First Nations Wellness Specialist. With each session, groups receive a package that includes a step-by-step booklet with fun and meaningful activities, resource materials, and promotional gifts for the youth participants.

**Funding is available, however these sessions must be delivered by March 31, 2021.** If you would like to learn more about the Brighter Days program or reserve a session for your community, please contact me at [Deanna.dunham@kidshelpphone.ca](mailto:Deanna.dunham@kidshelpphone.ca). To learn more about Kids Help Phone's Indigenous Initiatives please visit [www.KidsHelpPhone.ca/FindingHope](http://www.KidsHelpPhone.ca/FindingHope).



Whenever you need to talk,  
we're open.

-  KidsHelpPhone.ca/Indigenous
-  Text 686868 (youth) or 741741 (adults)
-  Call 1-800-668-6868
-  Message at Facebook.com/  
CrisisTextLinepoweredbyKidsHelpPhone

Indigenous people can connect with an Indigenous volunteer crisis responder when available by messaging **FIRST NATIONS, INUIT or METIS** over text or messenger.

Kids Help Phone 

Kids Help Phone offers kids, teens and adults a critical lifeline of hope and support through our free services which are available 24/7 in English and French. First Nations individuals reach out to Kids Help Phone from every corner of the country via phone, text, Facebook Messenger, and through our internationally-recognized website. In addition, Kids Help Phone helps connect young people to local services through the largest national database of youth-serving programs in Canada.

We are very excited to be able to invite you to our 15th Annual Chiefs of Ontario Health Forum. This year's theme is "Sharing Stories: The True Test of Resilience Amidst a Pandemic", to be presented virtually February 23, 24 and 25, 2021. The forum provides an opportunity for First Nation Leadership, Health Directors and Community Health Workers to share their successes and opportunities in supporting First Nations today and preparing for the future.

Register by January 27, 2021 to be eligible for the Early Bird Prize!! Head on over to <https://chiefsmeeting.com/coo-health-forum> to register, and download the WHOVA APP to keep informed on your event!



**CHIEFS OF ONTARIO**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**2021**  
FEBRUARY  
**23-24-25**

CHIEFS OF ONTARIO  
**15<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL HEALTH FORUM**  
A VIRTUAL EVENT  
Sharing Stories: The True Test of Resilience Amidst a Pandemic

*Our Health,  
Our Future*

**TO REGISTER GO TO:**

<https://www.chiefsmeeting.com/coo-health-forum>

REGISTRATIONS RECEIVED BY January 27, 2021 (5:00 PM E.S.T.) WILL BE ENTERED INTO AN EARLY BIRD DRAW.

# Ontario Health

## Supporting Virtual Care Access within First Nations Communities

OTN is actively working to provide supports to ensure access to care for First Nations Community Members. Regular discussions have been held with the Mental Health and Addictions Working Group on needs of service providers in the virtual environment imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We are working to make connections possible for service providers such as Mental Health Counselors, Crisis Workers, Midwives, and Traditional Healers as well as within various locations like schools, elder centres, and the corrections system.

### Indigenous Virtual Health Care Services

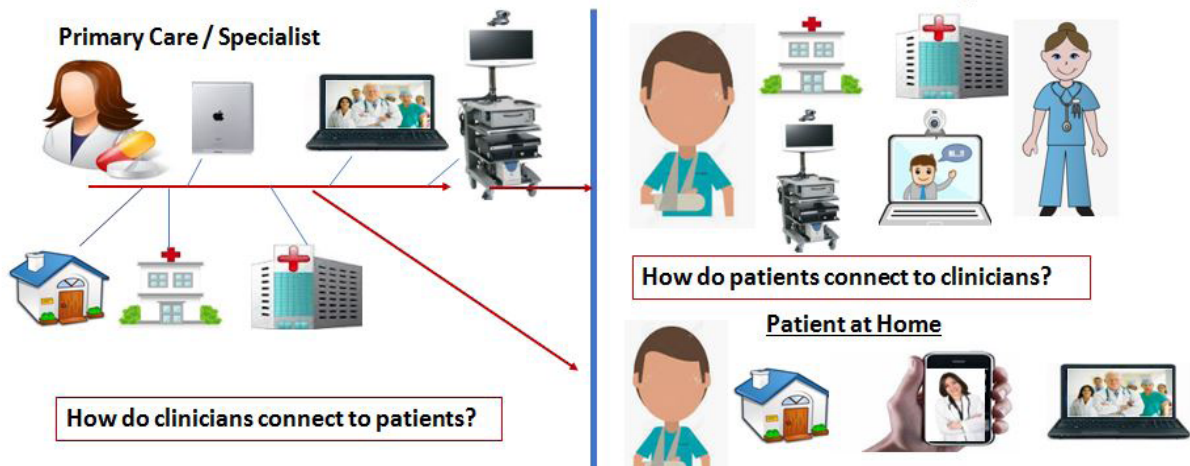
Health care services are available for Indigenous Patients and Clients via virtual care access / telemedicine.

Virtual care connects Indigenous patients across the province with culturally sensitive primary care, specialized care, and emergency services clinicians.



### Indigenous Community Access to Virtual Care

#### What connections look like today!



## Existing Supports for Organizations through Ontario Health

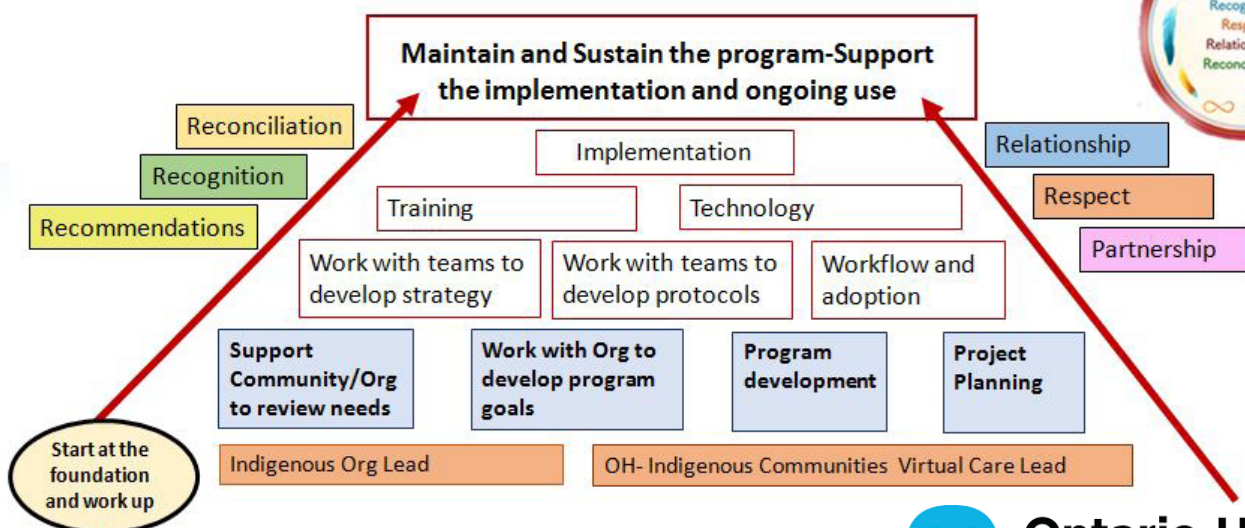
Ontario Health Provides virtual care access support including:

- Engagement and adoption of telemedicine / virtual care
- Change management and program development
- Project Planning
- Organizational virtual care strategy – Community specific
- Development of team protocols
- Workflow and adoption
- Training- technology, patient support and community engagement
- Program Implementation



**\*\* Note you can utilize the OH Indigenous VC Lead to support all types of access NOT just OTN legacy systems!**

### How Ontario Health Supports Virtual Care Implementation at Indigenous Organizations/Communities



If you would like to review your current virtual care / telemedicine connectivity or have additional questions about how your team can access the network remotely please reach out to Rebecca or Allyson!

Rebecca Swick  
 Provincial Lead- Equity- Indigenous Communities  
 Ontario Health- OTN  
 866-454-6861 X4270  
 Rebecca.swick@ontariohealth.ca

Allyson Gula  
 Regional Telemedicine Navigator  
 Keewaytinook Okimakanak eHealth Telemedicine  
 1-807-735-1381 ext. 1380  
 allysongula@kochiefs.ca

# THE COO HEALTH COORDINATION UNIT

The Health Co-ordination Unit (HCU) is the technical advisory body operating under the umbrella of the Chiefs of Ontario. It is comprised of the Health Directors of the PTOs, Six Nations of the Grand River and one representative from the Independent First Nations. The Unit is supported by the coordinating capacity of the Chiefs of Ontario office. The Health Coordination Unit is accountable to the Ontario Chiefs Committee on Health (OCCOH), the Leadership Council and the Ontario Chiefs in Assembly.

The Health Coordination Unit identifies health issues, prepares briefing papers and develops and recommends health strategies that require political support and action.

## GEORGINA LENTZ

Nishnawbe-Aski Nation  
glentz@nan.ca

## JAMIE RESTOULE

Anishinabek Nation  
Jamie.restoule@anishinabek.ca

## LYNDIA JONES

Independent First Nations  
lyndia@ifnc.ca

## SUZANNE NICHOLAS

Association of Iroquois Allied Indians  
snicholas@aiai.on.ca

## TASSANEE WEESE

Grand Council Treaty #3  
tassanee.weese@treaty3.ca

## LORI DAVIS-HILL

Six Nations of the Grand River  
ldavishill@sixnations.ca

## The COO Health Team

**CARMEN R. JONES**, Health Director || **ZACHARIAH GENERAL**, Associate Health Director  
|| **CAROLANN MARCOUX**, Community Wellness Manager || **LINDA OGILVIE**, Public  
Health Analyst || **BERNADETTE deGONZAGUE**, Mental Health and Addictions Policy Analyst  
|| **LILY MENOMINEE-BATISE**, Senior Health Policy Analyst || **MEGAN LOGAN**, Policy  
Analyst || **ROSEANNE SUTHERLAND**, Research Manager || **CAROL MULDER**, Senior  
Health Data Analyst || **PAM JOHNSON**, Research Analyst || **TREVOR KOOSTACHIN**,  
Quality Performance Measurement Research Analyst || **EMILY KING**, Jordan's Principle  
Analyst || **JENNIFER SHISHEESH**, Northern NIHB Navigator || **MIRYAN RUTLEDGE**,  
Southern NIHB Navigator || **ALICE LONGBOAT**, Senior Health  
Coordinator || **TIA PETTIT**, Health Coordinator || **CHARNELE SONDEZI**,  
Health Coordinator || **CINDY OWL**, Health Coordinator

