

FAQ: Is NSHC working to get rapid testing available for region?

A: Yes, there are a few options available. Abbott , BioFire, and Cephiad have all developed tests with quicker results that could be done in house. We are evaluating all these tests for quality and accuracy and are ordering the best options for our region. There are national backorders for all these tests (which started even before the tests were released) and testing is being prioritized to the hardest hit parts of the country right now. Once we received testing kits/equipment it will be validated and put into use in our region. We want to make sure we have highly accurate results for all of our patients.

FAQ: If there is an outbreak in my village, is NSHC prepared with supplies?

A: If or when it becomes necessary to set-up a field hospital in your village, NSHC will bring the personnel and all medical supplies to your community. NSHC will also bring cots, bedding, personnel protective equipment (PPE), and anything else to support the medical care of the patients. All villages should stay prepared by making sure your village emergency plan is updated for COVID-19. The Kawerak and NSHC team members working with you villages include: Charlene Saclamana, Dr. Mark Kelso, and Dr. Tim Lemaire.

FAQ: I heard there may be medication, similar to the medication treatment for Malaria, that can eradicate the vaccine? Is this true?

A: There are a lot of therapies under investigation and researchers continue to study the drug hydroxychloroquine, but it has not been proven at this point. There is no medication available to treat, prevent, or eradicate COVID-19.

FAQ: How long will our region need to stay prepared and aware of COVID-19?

A. NSHC is taking a long-term approach, even if the rates of infection remain low. NSHC is taking a not if but when approach, we will be prepared when it comes and every week without cases allows us to be that much more prepared. Other states with high infection rates anticipate they will be battling COVID-19 and possibly not in the clear until September 1 or longer. But, we need to always stay aware and from this point forward, be testing for COVID-19 when patients present with exposure or consistent symptoms.

FAQ: Is COVID-19 present in my water that I am drinking?

No, COVID-19 is not present in our water system and residents would not have boil water, if you are not already on a boil water notice in your village due to other concerns.

FAQ: Since all of NSHC facilities are closed for routine or scheduled appointments, what is NSHC doing to facilitate important care?

NSHC is providing patient visits by phone and video meetings. If you are a patient with an established provider, your visit can take place over the phone or by video in many cases. For any new patients, the first visit would ideally be a facetime/video visit. Providers can prescribe medications during a phone visit and there are no restrictions to this. NSHC clinics/facilities are all open for urgent needs, please call prior to make sure they are prepared first.

FAQ: Is NSHC prepared to support a large number of patients from the region who need to self-isolate and quarantine?

A: Yes, NSHC is already working with residents who need to quarantine. NSHC is leaving no one behind and will work with each resident on a case-by-case basis. If quarantine is not available in someone's village, NSHC is prepared to support the quarantine needs in Nome.

Once there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the region, NSHC will activate its isolation quarters plan. The isolation unit will support patients who are infected and need to self-isolate for 14 days.

There are several spaces that have been identified for both self-isolation and quarantine and NSHC is very confident in its preparedness in this area.

FAQ: Is NSHC still providing independent living services and/or personal care attendant services during this time to residents in their home? And, has NSHC shared prevention education with those families to keep them informed?

A: Yes, NSHC is still providing services to residents in their homes for both programs and our supervisors have reached out to all families again with prevention education and to answer any questions.