

COMMUNITY UPDATE #9

Notice of High-Risk Exposures to COVID-19 in Garden Village

April 13, 2021 – This notice is to advise the community of several high-risk exposures in Garden Village related to the positive case of COVID-19 at Our Lady of Sorrows school in Sturgeon Falls that was announced earlier this evening by the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit.

The Grade 7 and 8 cohort as well as individuals who boarded the #52 Alouette Bus Lines route are being asked to self-isolate. Bus route #52 also serves other students from White Woods Public School and Northern Secondary School. There are currently no high-risk exposures associated with Nbisong Bus Lines.

The exposure period began on April 9th and extends to April 23rd (two weeks from the start of the infectious period of the positive case). Our nursing staff have completed all notifications of high-risk contacts. While not considered an outbreak, this situation has resulted in at least 10 high-risk exposures in Garden Village with impacts to families and staff of Nipissing First Nation.

We are aware of the increased presence of variants of concern (VOCs) in this district and we must respond as though we are dealing with one until we know otherwise. At this time, Public Health only requires that the high-risk exposure case within the household self-isolate and that other members of the household who are asymptomatic can leave for essential purposes only. However, we are asking all members associated (living) with the high-risk exposures to stay home as well to help reduce the risk of spread within the community.

In response to this elevated risk level in Garden Village, we are proceeding with the following measures:

- **Nipissing Ojibway Daycare is CLOSED for the duration of the exposure period** (April 9-23). This is a precautionary measure and is in keeping with the approach we took with the Couchie Memorial Daycare related to the recent COVID-19 Outbreak in Duchesnay, which remains active. All parents have been notified.
- **NFN staff associated with a high-risk exposure are mandated to not come into the office or any NFN facility for work purposes for the 2-week exposure period** (April 9-23). Staff are to contact their managers or supervisors to make arrangements where required.
- **Garden Village playground amenities and the Outdoor Rink will be CLOSED for the duration of the exposure period** (April 9-23)

We urge all community members to continue following public health measures and the provincial **stay-at-home order** that is in place until at least May 6th. Details about these measures and how to register for COVID-19 vaccines through NFN Health Services is provided on the next page. We also ask everyone to **please be COVID kind** during these difficult times. No one intentionally gets COVID-19, but we all have to do our part to limit the spread and to be understanding of those who may be impacted by it.

Community Notice – April 13, 2021

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STAY HOME - The provincewide **stay-at-home** requires that every individual remain at their home and on their property at all times unless necessary to leave for essential reasons such as going to the grocery store or pharmacy, accessing health care services (including getting vaccinated), for outdoor exercise or for work that cannot be done remotely. This order is in effect for at least four weeks due to rapidly increasing case rates across Ontario and increased presence of Variants of Concern.

GET VACCINATED - Vaccines prevent people from getting sick with COVID-19 or experiencing severe symptoms if they do come into contact with COVID-19 including a variant. It is important that we vaccinate as many people as possible to achieve herd immunity. NFN Health Services has conducted two mass vaccination clinics to date, with nearly 1,200 individuals being vaccinated on NFN.

If you have not yet received a 1st dose and would like to, you are encouraged to call the Health Centre at 705-753-3312 to register as soon as possible. If you have registered and have not yet received a call for a vaccine appointment, please contact the Health Centre to confirm your contact details.

You must register in advance and will then be called for a vaccine appointment based on priority and the time at which you registered. We will not be accepting walk-up/walk-in vaccine appointments. Everyone must be pre-registered.

FOLLOW PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES – Variants have been shown to spread more quickly and easily.

It is imperative that people continue to follow public health guidance to prevent further spread of virus, including washing hands, physical distancing, wearing a face covering that fully covers the nose, mouth and chin and staying within your households.

GET TESTED – Have symptoms? **Get tested right away, and until you have results, you and everyone else you live with must stay home.** *Do not go to work or school or visit anyone if you have symptoms.* Residents who have symptoms or are concerned about a possible exposure to a positive case of COVID-19 are advised to get tested. *If you are concerned about exposure to a positive case due to the outbreak, mention that you are from Nipissing First Nation and they will prioritize you for a test.*

- **North Bay Regional Health Centre – 50 College Drive, North Bay**
Appointment Required – Call 705-474-8600 ext. 4110 - Open 9am to 5pm (7 days a week)
Assessment Centre is in parking lot #9 for symptomatic patients or children 8 & under
Drive thru options available near Emergency entrance available for asymptomatic people
- **West Nipissing Assessment Centre – 219 O’Hara Street, Sturgeon Falls (Community Complex)**
Appointment Required – Call 705-580-2186 - Open 12pm to 4pm (Monday to Friday)

If you are concerned about a potential exposure, please contact Carole Lafantaisie, NFN Community Health Nurse at (705) 840-8830. Other inquiries may be directed to Kimberly Lalonde, Director of Health Services at (705) 498-3698. Visit nfn.ca/covid19 for regular updates and links to helpful information.