



# Manitoba First Nations COVID-19 Pandemic Response Coordination Team Weekly Bulletin

**Date: January 15, 2021**

The Manitoba First Nations COVID-19 Pandemic Response Coordination Team advise that, since the January 8th bulletin, five hundred ninety nine(599) new First Nations COVID-19 cases were identified as of 7:00 am Friday, January 15th. The total number of lab-confirmed positive and probable positive First Nations cases in Manitoba has increased by 599, taking the total to 6989 cases. Of the total cases, 4118 cases are off-reserve and 2871 cases are on-reserve. The total number of recovered cases are now 4797, there have been 119 deaths, and 2073 cases are considered active.

	On Reserve	Off Reserve	Total
Active Cases	<b>1668</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>2073</b> (71%)
Total Cases	<b>2871</b>	<b>4118</b>	<b>6989</b> (26%)

*% is of Provincial Totals*

- New cases- 599
- FN Test positivity- 21%
- New tests- 2984
- Percentage of total tests in MB- 14%

## First Nations COVID-19 Hospitalizations

	Hospitalizations Totals (males/females)	Age Range	Median Range	ICU Patients (males/females)	ICU Age Range	ICU Median Age
Current	<b>48</b> (16/32)	<b>15-79</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>8</b> (3/5)	<b>34-61</b>	<b>47</b>
Total	<b>582</b> (248/334)	<b>6-93</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>133</b> (63/70)	<b>18-83</b>	<b>56</b>

- Deaths
  - Current- 7 (5 male, 2 female)
  - Total- 119 (56 male, 63 female)
- Age range of deaths-
  - Current- 53-76
  - Total- 9-90
- Deaths- Median Age
  - Current- 71
  - Total- 66

## Details of the 6989 First Nations cases:

- 2672 people in Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA)
- 975 people in the Interlake Eastern Regional Health Authority (IERHA)
- 479 people in the Southern Health-Santé Sud (SHSS)
- 347 people in the Prairie Mountain Regional Health Authority (PMH)
- 2516 people in the Northern Regional Health Authority (NRHA)
- 0 cases where the region of residence is pending
- The number of recovered cases is 4797
- The number of currently hospitalized cases is 48. This is 41% of all hospitalizations in the province currently.
- The number of First Nations people in the ICU due to COVID-19 is 8. This is 50% of all COVID-19 ICU admissions currently.
- The number of deaths among First Nations people due to COVID-19 is now 119, as 7 more deaths have been reported. The median age of deaths in First Nations is 66 (in comparison to 83 for the rest of MB).
- The cases have occurred in 3527 females and 3461 males
- The age range of cases is 1-93
- The most commonly reported age group of infected individuals is 20-29 (same as the rest of MB)
- Travel-acquired cases: 1% (in comparison to 2% for other Manitobans)
- Acquisition through contact with a known positive case: 70% (in comparison to 68% for other Manitobans)
- Average time from symptom onset until testing: 3 days (same as the rest of MB)
- 41% of cases reported the presence of an underlying illness (in comparison to 34% for the rest of MB)



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## First Nation Testing

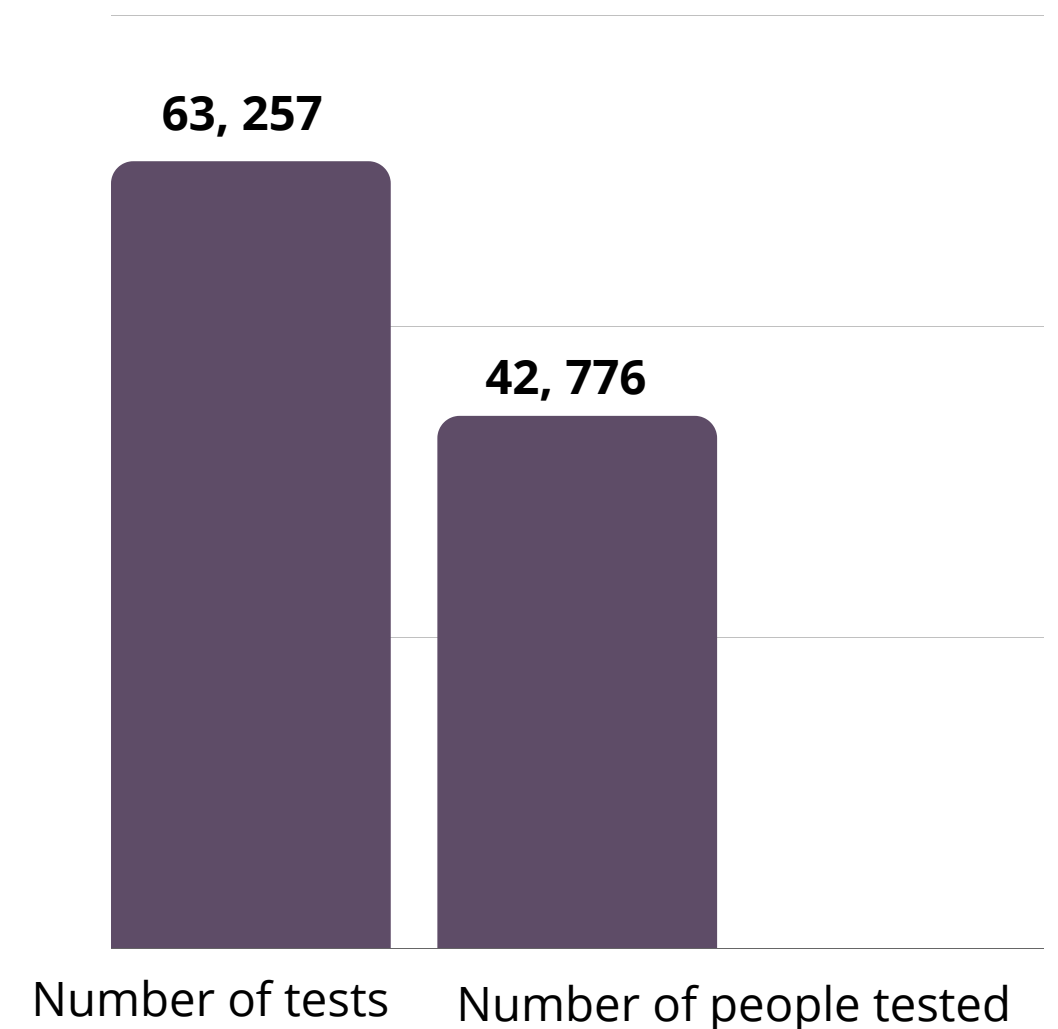
As of January 15th, 2021, the number of First Nations COVID-19 tests has risen by 2984, for a total of 63257 tests conducted for First Nations across Manitoba since the pandemic began. The 5-day COVID-19 test positivity rate in Manitoba First Nations is 21% which is higher than Manitoba's current 5-day test positivity rate of 10%.

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.

- 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 42776 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.

### Number of tests performed, and number of people tested



**70% of COVID-19 infections were a result of close contact to a positive cases**

**First Nations currently make up approximately 71% of active cases.**

## Discussion

COVID-19 case numbers do seem to be rising again, both for the Province of Manitoba and for First Nations people in Manitoba.

First Nations people are making up an increasingly disproportionate amount of new cases in Manitoba (60% today), and remain over-represented in hospitalizations (41%) and ICU admissions (50%). The 5 day test positivity rate remains significantly higher than the rest of the province (21%). While some communities are currently COVID free with no active cases, others continue to experience new cases or even outbreaks.

We continue to experience this pandemic in the context of longstanding challenges with inadequate, overcrowded housing and other gaps in access to social determinants of health. These challenges put First Nation communities at higher risk of spread of COVID-19 because they make it more difficult to isolate appropriately within the home and increase the risk of spread to other people within the home. Understanding that these baseline factors create this higher risk situation, it remains critical that we are diligent with following the protective public health measures to try to reduce these disproportionate impacts as much as we can.





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Although we have started rolling out COVID-19 vaccine to all 63 communities, the test-trace-isolate public health approach is the cornerstone of limiting the spread of COVID-19. We strongly encourage all people who are offered alternative isolation accommodations to agree to isolation outside of the home as this is an important and effective measure to slow the spread of COVID-19 to others in your home and community.

At the end of January 14, 2020, 36 First Nation communities have received their first shipment of the Moderna vaccine. In communities that have started their vaccination programs already, uptake is reported as very good, and we are very pleased to see First Nation elders leading the way in making informed choices and consenting to the vaccine. More vaccine shipments are going out today, and weather permitting 85% of the communities will have their vaccines.

We continue to work with our partners on the prioritization and sequencing beyond this first batch of doses. The Health Information Research Governance Committee has provided approval to report on vaccines in First Nations peoples, and we are working with partners on developing these reports.

At this time, PRCT advises all First Nations people and communities to take the actions above. In addition, we remind people to:

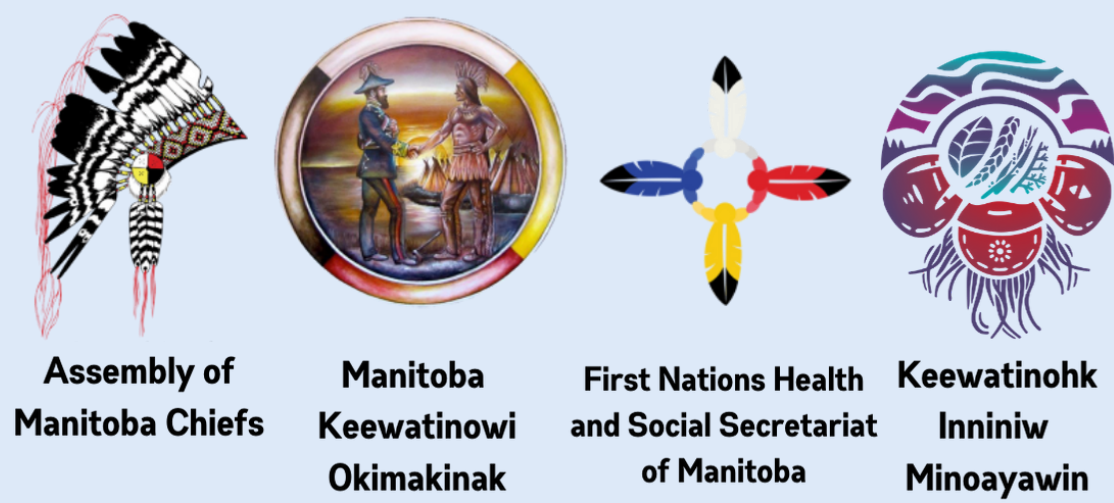
- Limit close contacts outside of the household. This is very important for reducing transmission of COVID-19.
  - If you have family who live in other communities/ areas from you, consider ways to connect that are lower risk for spreading COVID-19, such as connecting by phone, social media or other 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.

Given the ongoing concerning rise in cases in Manitoba, the province of Manitoba has extended the current Public Health Orders and the province remains at Red (Critical) on the Pandemic Response System. These Public Health Orders do apply in First Nations communities as well.

- It is critical that all people limit close contacts with people outside of their household.
- When leaving the home for essential services such as grocery shopping, wherever possible a single individual should go.
- Coping with the effects of social isolation can include spending time outside alone or with members of your household, focusing on ceremonial and spiritual practices that can be done individually or with members of your household, and virtual connections with others.
- Gatherings over 5 people are prohibited at this time. While we recognize how difficult this is in situations such as when our relatives are passing or have passed, wakes and funerals are high risk events for spreading COVID-19 and need to follow current restrictions.

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 to find out when/where you can be tested.

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>



Assembly of  
Manitoba Chiefs

Manitoba  
Keewatinow  
Okimakinak

First Nations Health  
and Social Secretariat  
of Manitoba

Keewatinohk  
Inniniw  
Minoayawin

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## 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.mkonation.com](http://www.mkonation.com)

[www.fnhssm.com](http://www.fnhssm.com)