



Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority

HEALTH CARE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FIRST NATIONS

P.O. Box 1300
61 Queen Street
Sioux Lookout, ON
P8T 1B8

Phone: (807) 737-1802
Fax: (807) 737-1076
Toll Free: 1-800-842-0681
Web: www.slnha.com

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sioux Lookout Area Chiefs and Health Directors

FROM: Dr. Lloyd Douglas, Public Health Physician, SLFNHA

DATE: July 14, 2021.

SUBJECT: Public Health Memo - Management of Previously Cleared Cases with New Positive Results

The Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) is aware that confirmed cases may continue to test positive with COVID PCR testing, even after clearance from isolation and/or after receiving negative results, for several weeks to months after infection. Persistent detection greater than 4 months from initial positive result has been reported in Ontario.

New positive results after clearance may represent:

- Ongoing positive from initial infection (“**Re-positive**”); or
- Re-infection/potential re-infection (“**Reinfection**”).

Re-testing after clearance will be based on clinical indications for testing, for example, in the context of new symptoms compatible with COVID-19, or as directed in the context of new high-risk exposures or COVID-19 outbreak investigations.

Individuals who have previously been diagnosed with and cleared of COVID-19 infection should **resume asymptomatic surveillance testing after 90 days from their COVID-19 infection** based on the date of their positive result. If there is uncertainty regarding previous infection, we will resume asymptomatic surveillance testing immediately. Individuals who were previously a probable case or other situations where it is uncertain if the individual was a ‘true’ case should continue to participate in asymptomatic surveillance/screening testing. Asymptomatic testing as a contact with high-risk exposure to a case or as part of an outbreak investigation may generate ongoing repeat positive results that may need to be investigated and/or repeated.

If there is evidence that the new positive result is likely to be ongoing persistent detection from the first infection, then no further public health case and contact management is required. Supporting evidence of a re-positive case includes repeat testing is negative, or both specimen(s) are close to limit of detection.

There is emerging evidence of cases of true re-infection as demonstrated by genetic sequencing showing strain differences between the initial and subsequent infections. With the emergence of the variants of concern (VOCs), there is an increased risk of reinfection from some VOCs. A confirmed case of reinfection is a person with two (or more) separate laboratory-confirmed infections with SARS-CoV-2, with time-based or test-based clearance between the two infections where there is



Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority

HEALTH CARE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FIRST NATIONS

P.O. Box 1300
61 Queen Street
Sioux Lookout, ON
P8T 1B8

Phone: (807) 737-1802
Fax: (807) 737-1076
Toll Free: 1-800-842-0681
Web: www.slnha.com

evidence that the two infections are caused by different lineages. Cases that do NOT meet the case definition for re-infection, but where reinfection is suspected will be managed as currently infectious.

We continue to emphasize the importance of choosing the COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine will: protect you, protect your loved ones, slow the spread of the virus, and help end the pandemic. Even those who have had the COVID vaccine still could get the virus. It is strongly recommended that all individuals continue to follow all public health measures. This includes those who have taken the first shot or who have been fully vaccinated. Important public health measures include:

- physical distancing
- hand washing
- wearing masks in public where physical distancing cannot be maintained
- avoiding unnecessary travel, and
- keeping to a single social bubble

If you have any community member with symptoms that could be caused by COVID-19, please contact your nursing station to be assessed as soon as possible.

If you have any questions about how to best protect the health of your community, please do not hesitate to contact the following: Emily Paterson, Director of Approaches to Community Wellbeing (Emily.Paterson@slnha.com) or Dr. Lloyd Douglas, SLFNHA Public Health Physician (L.Douglas@slnha.com).

For more information, please email ACWInfo@slnha.com or for more resources, visit: <https://www.slnha.com/covid/covid-resources/>. Please visit the SLFNHA website www.slnha.com/covid/ and SLFNHA Facebook page for regular updates and information.

cc. James Morris, Executive Director, SLFNHA
SLFNHA Board of Directors
SLFNHA Chiefs Council on Health
Community Health Directors and Physicians
Sioux Lookout area Tribal Councils
Nishnawbe Aski Nation

Source: *Management of Cases and Contacts of COVID-19 in Ontario May 6, 2021 (version 12.0)*
https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/contact_mgmt/management_cases_contacts.pdf