



Date: July 17, 2020
To: Mayor Ethan Berkowitz
From: Christy Lawton, on behalf of Natasha Pineda, Director
Subject: July 17, 2020, COVID-19 Risk Assessment Update

This is a weekly report designed to accompany a review of the data dashboard for the period of July 9 - July 15, 2020 with some July 16, 2020 status data. This will be reviewed and discussed on July 17, 2020, at 10:30 a.m.

Based on the data reviewed for the past week, the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) is a **YELLOW LIGHT** for epidemiology, **YELLOW LIGHT** for health care capacity and **RED LIGHT** for public health capacity. There continues to be supply chain disruption for PPE and testing supplies for some health care facilities. There are persons in Anchorage with COVID-19 who do not currently have symptoms. There has been a significant increase in cases and new positive cases from out-of-state critical infrastructure workers.

Everyone needs to continue physical distancing, wearing masks/face coverings that completely cover your nose and mouth in public spaces, especially in indoor spaces where physical distancing cannot be assured, and wash hands frequently or use hand sanitizer when water is unavailable.

Epidemiology

This metric considers a variety of factors like case counts, COVID-19-related hospitalizations, and Persons Under Investigation (PUI) who are hospitalized. We are tracking whether the cases are attributable to community transmission (no identifiable source) or due to travel or secondary transmission (close contacts of a confirmed case). We are carefully monitoring other factors that can trigger changes to interventions, such as congregate settings, high-density housing and other causes or risk factors that could contribute to increased transmission.

Case Count Trends

- Average daily rate of new COVID-19 cases of MOA residents, based on **onset date**, is an increase over last week: **24.9 cases** per day from versus 16.4 cases per day from July 2 - July 8, 2020.
 - Peak was 24.9 cases on July 12, 2020
- We had a total of **215** new cases July 9 - July 15, 2020 (31 per day), which is an increase over the total of 59 for last week. Twenty-eight of the 215 new cases are from out-of-state: five visitors, eight tourism, six seafood industry, four other and five unknowns.
 - In comparison, there were 11 out of state cases last week.

- Note: Out of state numbers are not reflected in the Anchorage Dashboard but can be found on the State of Alaska DHSS's COVID page. Go to <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/default.aspx> and scroll down to the embedded information from the dashboard. Immediately below that, you'll find a link. The direct link to the information can be found on at <https://coronavirus-response-alaska-dhss.hub.arcgis.com/datasets/covid-cases-out-of-state/data>.
- **Interpretation:** New local cases are being found at an even more increasing rate than last week. Community spread is present in all varieties of public and private settings, but due to the number of cases continuing to be attributed to clusters (local and statewide), more time is needed to understand if the increase is widespread or due to the clusters. This measure **YELLOW**, to reflect the upward trend that is not directly attributable to clusters.

Percent Positive

- Percentage of tests which were positive over the last week is 1.7% versus 1.9% last week.
- **Interpretation:** PCR testing continues at a similar pace to last week. The low percentage of positives is a sign that we are probably doing enough testing, overall. If this measure were to approach 5% (**YELLOW**) we would be concerned not enough testing is occurring and 10% (**RED**) would be a cause for significant concern.

COVID/PUI hospitalization trends

- As of July 16, 2020, six Persons Under Investigation and 16 confirmed cases were hospitalized.
- **Interpretation:** This number has held steady since last week, when it had doubled from the week before. Concern about risk for hospitalizations with current positives is high; this is a lagging indicator.

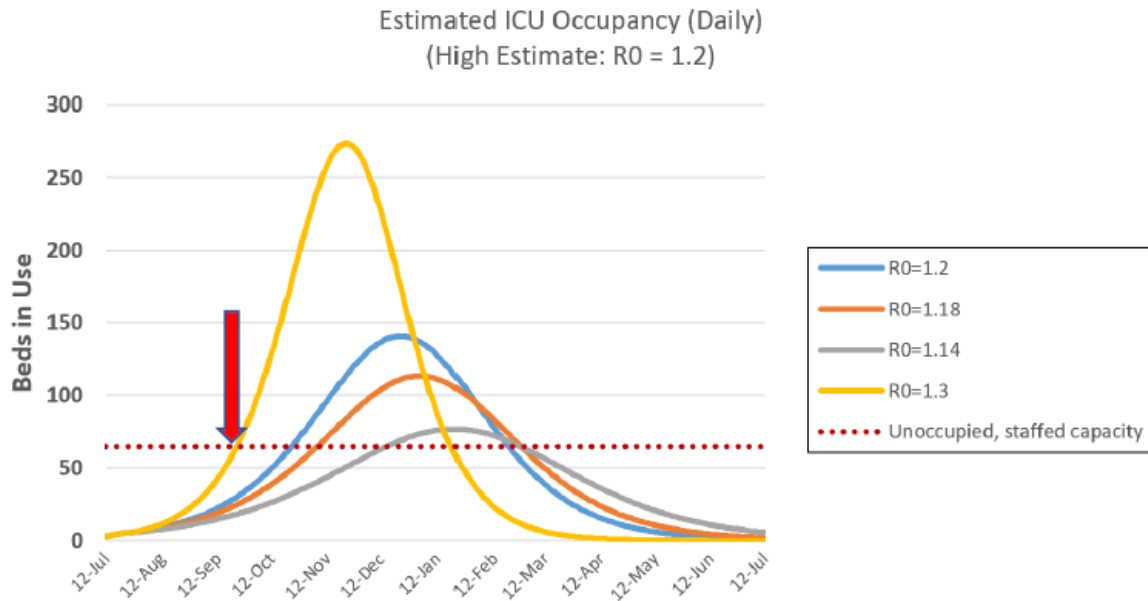
Health Care Capacity

These metrics measure if we can care for our population safely in the case of a surge in people sick with COVID-19. We want to ensure that we have capacity, which is measured by ICU beds and ventilators, health care providers and first responders can source PPE, testing supplies are available, and testing activity is happening at the right level.

Ability/Capacity to meet anticipated case surge

- ICU beds: as of July 16, 2020, 29 beds were available out of 92.
- Ventilators: as of July 16, 2020, 117 ventilators were available out of 146.
- **Reproductive number estimates for Anchorage and Alaska**
 - COVID ActNow (current week is an estimate)
 - Anchorage: **1.25** for July 15; was 1.26 for July 8
 - Alaska: **1.29** for July 14; was 1.27 for July 7
 - State of Alaska statewide estimate: 1.21 on July 9, 2020

- **Interpretation:** The Epidemic continues to grow and is accelerating. Overall, the ability of the healthcare system is sufficient to meet anticipated demand in hospitalizations. However, the public health response for case investigations and contact tracing is not keeping up. This means that infected persons are not being counselled in a timely manner regarding isolation and contacts are not being promptly reached to start quarantine. This will result in further acceleration of the epidemic unless other measures can reduce transmission. This measure is **YELLOW**.
- R values are similar to last week. We continue to be well above an Rt of 1, indicating the epidemic is growing. Since late June, our reproductive number has been consistently over 1.25 indicating little change since the mask order on June 26. The reproductive number in Anchorage is similar to the overall State estimate.
- Last week, the state model predicted 117 new cases per day in state by July 18th. On July 13, the [Anchorage Daily News](#) reported the State reported 113 cases the previous day. While that is a recent peak, and case numbers have not reached 100 per day again, the model continues to be accurate. The model predicts 160 cases per day by 7.23.20.
- In this week's report we are attaching UAA's "CDC Surge Tool Model Results for June 4 vs July 12 for Anchorage" white paper by Tom Hennessy, MD, MPH and Lisa Bulkow, MS UAA College of Health, July 15, 2020. Key findings are as follows:
 - "In the past month, the outbreak in Anchorage has worsened substantially. Daily case numbers and the effective reproductive number have increased. **The predicted time until we exceed Anchorage's ICU capacity has been cut in half, from approximately 20 weeks to 10 weeks.** We are in a critical time period and must reduce transmission to prevent exceeding our health capacity. The accelerating epidemic will also negatively affect the risk assessments used to determine how, or if, schools and universities can re-open."
 - The yellow line on the chart on the following page predicts ICU usage, assuming a steadily growing pandemic with an R of 1.3, with six percent of cases admitted to the hospital and 24 percent of those admitted to the ICU. The red arrow on Sept 22 is the date the model predicts the ICU will reach full occupancy. The other lines show the predicted peak of ICU beds for lower R values.



Sufficient PPE for all health care workers and first responders

- Health care and first responders are able to achieve a sufficient amount of PPE, but not through normal channels.
- As of July 16, 2020, 44% of Anchorage-based providers report adequate PPE, 40% report limited, 5% report inadequate and 10% did not report, per the Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association (ASHNA) dashboard.
- **Interpretation:** Supply chain remains disrupted. This is an area of concern, as it was last week. This measurement is in the **YELLOW** zone. This light will turn green when supply chain access to PPE returns to normal.

Ability and capacity to test widely

- Average daily test rate from July 9 - July 15, 2020 was 927 tests, a decrease from the average from last week, which was 971. On July 10, 2020, only 2 tests were reported, which could be lowering the average.
- Providence drive-thru testing hours were expanded effect July 5th to Monday thru Friday: 9:00am-6:00pm and Saturday-Sunday: 9:00-5:00pm.
- On July 16, 2020, hospitals reported 41,988* swabs and 28,760 UTM/VTM testing capacity on-hand; AHD has 2,043 kits (swabs and UTM) on-hand. The continued limited amount of UTM/VTM may not be enough supplies for the needs associated with pre-procedure testing and public need. The Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) transitioned to using testing methods that do not rely on the UTM/VTM.
- Testing kit and supplies requests into the state as of July 16, 2020:
 - July 06, 2020, 5 boxes of Abbott kits for First Care Medical Centers LLC, sent 7/6/2020, Filled 7/7/2020 received 10 boxes
 - July 06, 2020, 200 swabs and VTM for Latouche Pediatrics, sent 7/6/2020, Filled 7/7/2020

- July 07, 2020, 200 swabs and VTM for Urgent Care Medical, sent 7/7/2020, Filled 7/8/2020
- July 07, 2020, 100 swabs and VTM for PM Pediatrics, sent 7/7/2020, Filled 7/8/2020
- July 08, 2020, 10 swabs and VTM for Manuka Health, sent 7/8/2020, Filled 7/9/2020
- July 08, 2020, 200 swabs and VTM for Arete Family Medicine, sent 7/8/2020, Filled 7/9/2020
- July 09, 2020, 100 swabs and VTM for AK Heart Institute, sent 7/9/2020, Filled 7/10/2020
- July 10, 2020, 6 boxes of Abbott kits for First Care Medical Centers LLC, sent 7/10/2020, Filled 7/11/2020
- July 10, 2020, 6 boxes of Abbott kits for Medical Park Family Clinic, sent 7/10/2020, Filled 7/13/2020
- July 15, 2020, 100 swabs and VTM for The Children's Clinic, sent 7/15/2020, Filled 7/16/2020
- July 15, 2020, 200 swabs and VTM for Hillside Family Medicine, sent 7/15/2020, Filled 7/16/2020
- July 16, 2020, 6 boxes of Abbot kits for First Care Medical Centers LLC, sent 7/16/2020, Pending
- July 16, 2020, 200 swabs and VTM for Latouche Pediatrics, sent 7/16/2020, Pending
- **Interpretation:** Supplies on-hand are adequate for maintaining testing of symptomatic persons and implementing some community-based testing strategies. Increased strains on testing supplies for the airport and increase in potential community need make this measure **YELLOW**. This is an area of caution that should be monitored closely.

Public Health Capacity

These metrics measure AHD's capacity to track and follow the positive cases and their contacts, ensuring as many people as possible self-isolate or quarantine depending on the situation, and testing of symptomatic contacts.

Data analysis:

All positive cases interviewed, and all contacts monitored.

- As of July 16, 2020, the AHD team, with support from the State of Alaska (SOA) and the Arctic Investigation Program (AIP), interviewed 778 positive cases and are currently monitoring 461 cases.
- As of July 16, 2020, the AHD team has monitored 1299 contacts and is currently monitoring 452 contacts.
- As of July 16, 2020, the AHD team has monitored a total of 2,077 cases and contacts and is currently monitoring a total of **913 cases and contacts**.

Symptomatic contacts referred to testing within 24 hours.

- As of July 16, 2020, the AHD team was able to refer all symptomatic cases for testing or collected the samples themselves.

Interpretation: Public health contact tracing capacity is at its max. This past week we continued to rely on SOA and AIP support to complete all case contact investigations. We are behind one

to two days with the initial contact with a positive case. AHD has also moved temporarily to a triaging system where contact tracing may not occur for every new case. Focus is given to high risk cases first. Given the data entry delay, the reliance on staff outside of the AHD and the lack of centralized database and staffing, there is difficulty in understanding how and where clusters are occurring in Anchorage. The contract with ASD nurses ends August 12th and AHD will be recruiting for 10 new full-time staff to fill the gap ASD will leave. AHD is also in the process of bringing on five temporary positions to also help with contact tracing and various administrative functions to support the team. AHD is waiting for the statewide case contact and investigation database which will increase efficiencies with the entire process and enable us to utilize the surge workforce via the UAA/SOA agreement. This is expected in the next two weeks. Due to this challenge the measure is **RED**.

Other items of note:

- AHD continues to investigate cases associated with a variety of community businesses, agencies, and organizations, for example, restaurants, hotels, places of worship, retail businesses, assisted living homes and many others.
- **Interpretation:** This indicates that there are persons in Anchorage with infection who do not have symptoms, and there is a continued presence of positive cases in out-of-state individuals. This highlights the need to continue physical distancing, use of masks, and hand washing.
- The continued uptick in cases statewide and continued discovery of asymptomatic cases is concerning. COVID-19 is circulating, and we need to ask the community to remember:
 - There are people out and about in Anchorage with unrecognized COVID-19 who are infectious even though they do not have symptoms.
 - Most of us remain susceptible, and some of us are at great risk of severe disease and death.
 - It is still essential that we follow the basics steps needed to prevent transmission of the virus, to protect ourselves, our families, and our community.
 - Practice physical distancing
 - Use masks/face coverings in public spaces
 - Practice careful handwashing