



- Akiak
- Akiachak
- Alakanuk
- Andreafsky
- Aniak
- Anvik
- Atmaultluk
- Bethel
- Bill Moor'e's Slough
- Chefornak
- Chevak
- Chuathbaluk
- Chuloonawick
- Crooked Creek
- Eek
- Emmonak
- Georgetown
- Grayling
- Hamilton
- Holy Cross
- Hooper Bay
- Kasigluk
- Kipruk
- Kongiganak
- Kotlik
- Kwetbiluk
- Kwigillingok
- Lime Village
- Lower Kalskag
- Marshall
- Mekoryuk
- Mountain Village
- Napaimute
- Napakiaik
- Napaskiak
- Newtok
- Nightmute
- Nunam iqua
- Nunapitchuk
- Ohogomiut
- Oscarville
- Paimute
- Pilot Station
- Pitka's Point
- Quinhagak
- Red Divil
- Russian Mission
- Scammon Bay
- Shageluk
- Steetmute
- St. Mary's
- Stony River
- Teksook Bay
- Tuluksak
- Tuntutuliak
- Tununak
- Umkumiut
- Upper Kalskag

July 2, 2020

Cepheid
904 Caribbean Drive
Sonnyvale, CA 94089

RE: Supporting At-Risk Communities in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region

To Whom It May Concern:

The Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC) would like to procure 2500 Cepheid tests to help with early detection of COVID-19 in the YK- Delta region and to help prevent community spread of the disease in one of the most remote, economically depressed, and medically underserved areas of the United States.

The Alaska Native population in this region suffers dramatic health disparities and high rates of infectious diseases. Recent research led by the CDC has shown rates of respiratory hospitalizations for severe respiratory infections in the YK Delta communities without running water to be among the highest documented rates worldwide, putting the population at extreme risk for complications from COVID-19.

YKHC is a non-profit tribal health organization which administers a comprehensive health care delivery system, including disease prevention programs and environmental health services, for over 50 rural communities in the YK Delta region. The system includes community clinics, sub regional clinics, and a regional hospital in Bethel, Alaska.

Spanning 76,000 square miles, the region lacks an inter-regional road system, and travel occurs by small plane, boat, and snowmobile. The region is home to approximately 30,000 residents, primarily Yup'ik Eskimo and Athabascan Indians, residing in remote villages averaging a population of approximately 500 people each. Most village homes are small, and household overcrowding is common. The region is severely economically depressed, with more than 20% of residents living below the federal poverty level, and over one-third of homes lacking in-home piped water and sewer service, which makes it difficult prevent water-washed diseases like COVID-19.

The only way for COVID-19 to enter the region is by air, and nearly all travel to the region must go through the Bethel Regional Airport. YKHC has set-up a free testing station for the 50-90 inbound passengers who arrive each day. However, due to our remoteness, it takes five-to-seven days to get results back from a lab in Anchorage.

As states continue to open up, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the region to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We have seen a surge in positive tests over the past weeks. Without the ability to rapidly identify cases, coupled with the inability for residents to isolate from household members or wash hands in homes without running water, we fear a large outbreak could occur. We have no intensive care unit in the region, and only four ventilators, so it will not take long to overwhelm the healthcare system in our region.

YKHC has a Cepheid GeneXpert System at its hospital in Bethel, however we lack enough tests to use it to detect COVID-19. We ask for your help by prioritizing the distribution of Cepheid SARS-CoV-2 tests to YKHC to help prevent community spread of COVID-19 in a vulnerable region with critical need.

Sincerely,

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORPORATION



Dan Winkelman, President & CEO