



# **Communicable Disease Emergency- Maskwacis Health Services Incident Command**



Maskwacis Health Services enacted the Communicable Disease Emergency- Incident Command (CDE-IC) Center as of March 14, 2020.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Situation Summary:

- 18,000+ residents in Maskwacis occupying 2000 homes which averages 9 residents per home; many homes are between 15-20 residents which is a normal living situation on the 4 Nations of Maskwacis, with the occasional extreme overcrowding of up to 30 residents per home.
- Population of both Wetaskiwin and Ponoka is 19,884 and both communities have hospitals, whereas Maskwacis does not have a hospital and has 18,000 residents.
- Ponoka General Hospital, which is one of our neighboring hospitals to Maskwacis, will not be a COVID positive treatment hospital.
- Chronic conditions like diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, cancer, autoimmune disorders and respiratory disorders are prevalent in First Nations communities with an estimate of up to 50% of our population being affected with one of these diseases; which we know makes them more vulnerable to adverse outcomes requiring hospitalization and/or ICU should they contract COVID-19.
- Residents of Maskwacis rely upon Ponoka and Wetaskiwin for their healthcare needs. If we do not successfully quarantine in Maskwacis, we anticipate infection rates of over 50%. This would mean more than 9,000 infected individuals. Estimates suggest that 10% may require hospitalization and 5% will be life-threatening infections. The demand on our healthcare system will rapidly overwhelm the resources we have in place.
- While the CDE-IC team works to set up isolation centers, the main health center (Maskwacis Health Services) has over 145 staff, most of whom have patient contact on a daily basis and cannot safely distance from co-workers requiring PPE according to AHS guidelines for continuous PPE.
- CDE-IC Isolation Centers can house up to 200 individuals and staffing will be 24/7, all requiring appropriate PPE as well.
- Currently our PPE supply will not last our main health center (Maskwacis Health Services) more than 6 days, let alone if we start to run the isolation sites.
- If we were running all of our isolation sites, then we could operate them for 6 hrs based on 202 beds.



## ISOLATION CENTERS- 3 SITES ON RESERVE

**Status:** One site operational. Second site opening mid-April 2020. Third site end of April 2020.

**For:** Asymptomatic isolation centers planned to protect the vulnerable and Elderly knowledge keepers of the community when a confirmed COVID-19 positive case is identified within their home.

**Why:** Due to overcrowding and inability to safely self-isolate in the home, we are providing sites for medically fragile and vulnerable Elders to safely self-isolate outside of the home for the required duration in one of our sites.

### **Situation Summary**

- Maskwacis Health Services (MHS) has coordinated with the Four Nations of Maskwacis to operate three isolation centers in the community.
- These centers will be used to safely isolate asymptomatic medically vulnerable community members from a COVID-19 positive home, reducing their risk of contracting COVID-19.
- Those who have been deemed vulnerable, in line with AHS guidelines, include our Elders/knowledge keepers (65+yrs old) and those who are chronically ill.
- Healthy isolation is our best means of protecting these vulnerable community members, as leaving them in homes with infected individuals places them at a higher risk. Once a community member has been confirmed positive for COVID-19, our team will work to extract vulnerable persons from the home and safely house them in isolation centers.
- Currently, MHS is in the process of opening three sites for healthy isolation: two sites in local schools and one within an ATCO-supplied trailer compound.
- Operating under the AHS model of Quarantine-in-Home, our community has a limited capacity to safely contain the spread of COVID-19. This is due to the overcrowding of homes in conjunction with heightened vulnerability to infection due to risk factors such as addiction, obesity, diabetes, and immune disorders.



**The capacities for these sites are as follows**

**Site 1**

**Location:** Ehpewapahk Alternate School (Ermineskin Cree Nation)

**Capacity:** 12 patients, 12 Additional Caregivers

**Operational as of:** April 6

**Site 2**

**Location:** Nipisihkopahk Secondary School (Samson Cree Nation)

**Capacity:** 41 Patients, 41 Additional Support Caregivers

**Operational as of:** April 15

**Site 3**

**Location:** Bear Park (Ermineskin Cree Nation)

**Capacity:** 46 Patients

**Operational as of:** April 30



