



YKHC's vaccination team started giving shots to 12-15 year-olds in villages on May 17. In Toksook Bay, Angel Augustine, Jayden Rude-Carl, and Cecily Mark stepped up to get their first doses of the Pfizer vaccine. Pictured with their moms, Mary Carl, Sonya Lincoln and Louise Mark. Lower left: In Bethel, Dr. Ellen Hodges and Dr. Elizabeth bates administered the vaccine to Amanda and Antonio Lozano, shown here with their mother Virginia. Lower right: Jackson Iverson gets his shot from Dr. Hodges on the first day. See President & CEO Dan Winkelman's message on page 3 and our COVID-19 Update on page 4 for more about youth vaccinations and new masking guidance.

## INSIDE

- Numbers to Call..... 2
- Board of Directors..... 2
- President & CEO Message..... 3
- COVID-19 Update..... 4-5
- Citations for Excellence..... 6-8
- Recipe of the Month..... 9
- HEALTHY LIVING
  - Men's Health Month ..... 9
- CHAP NEWS
  - Health Aides of the Month .....10
- Boating Safety .....10
- Cut Back on Sugary Drinks .....11
- Village Travel Schedule .....12

## COVID-19 RESOURCES

COVID-19 Nurse Triage Line  
**543-6949**

YKHC Website  
[www.ykhc.org/covid-19](http://www.ykhc.org/covid-19)

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/>

## RESOURCES

YKHC main switchboard ..... 543-6000  
Toll Free ..... 1-800-478-3321

## APPOINTMENTS

Outpatient Clinics ..... 543-6442  
Dental ..... 543-6229  
Optometry ..... 543-6336  
Audiology..... 543-6466

## SUBREGIONAL CLINICS

Aniak..... 675-4556  
Emmonak..... 949-3500  
St. Mary's..... 438-3500  
Toksook Bay..... 427-3500  
Hooper Bay..... 758-3500

## SERVICES

Inpatient (North Wing) ..... 543-6330  
Pharmacy Refill Line ..... 543-6988  
Toll Free ..... 877-543-6988  
Physical Therapy ..... 543-6342  
Women's Health ..... 543-6296  
Irrivik Birthing Center ..... 543-6346  
Behavioral Health Services ..... 543-6100  
BH CRISIS RESPONSE LINE ..... 543-6499  
Substance Abuse Treatment ..... 543-6730  
Sobering Center ..... 543-6830  
Developmental Disabilities ..... 543-2762  
Emergency Room ..... 543-6395  
Office of Environmental Health & Engineering,  
Injury Contro & EMS..... 543-6420

## ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT

Administration..... 543-6020  
Human Resources..... 543-6060  
Public Relations ..... 543-6013  
Travel Management..... 543-6360

The Messenger is a monthly publication produced by the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation's Public Relations Department as a report to Tribal Members.

For questions, comments, submission of articles, or subscription information, write to Messenger Editor, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, P.O. Box 528, Bethel, Alaska 99559; or call 907-543-6039. E-mail: [publicrelations@ykhc.org](mailto:publicrelations@ykhc.org)  
Deadline is the 15th of the month, or the preceding Friday if the 15th is on a weekend, for publication on the first of the following month.

The Messenger is also available for download on our website at [www.ykhc.org/messenger](http://www.ykhc.org/messenger). Please ask permission to reprint articles or pictures.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**ATTENTION:** If you speak Yup'ik, free translations services are available to you. Call 907-543-6603.

## YKHC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Unit 1



Mary Ayunerak  
Alakanuk



Michael Hunt, Sr.  
Kotlik

### Unit 2



Geraldine Beans  
St. Mary's



Seat Vacant

Seat Vacant

### Unit 3



Bonnie Persson  
Upper Kalskag



Patricia Yaska  
Chuathbaluk



Moses Owen  
Akiak



James Nicori  
Kwethluk

### Unit 4

### Unit 5



Stan Hoffman, Sr.  
Bethel



Alton Alexie  
Bethel



Walter Jim  
Bethel



Chris Larson  
Napaskiak

### Unit 6



Sam Tinker Sr.  
Kasigluk



Adolph Lewis  
Kwigillingok

### Unit 7



Abraham David  
Mekoryuk



James Sipary  
Toksook Bay

### Unit 9



Patrick Tall  
Chevak



John Uttereyuk  
Scammon Bay

### Unit 10



Darren Cleveland  
Quinhagak

### Unit 11



Marvin Deacon  
Grayling

### Honorary Board Member



James Charlie, Sr.  
Toksook Bay

# Message

from the President & CEO



Dan Winkelman, President & CEO.

On May 13, 2021, YKHC began vaccinating 12 to 15 year-old children in Bethel against COVID-19. The following week of May 17 began our vaccination efforts in villages.

There is strong demand for the vaccine in this newly eligible age group. YKHC encourages everyone 12 years of age and older to get vaccinated as soon as possible. High vaccination rates will set us up for a successful summer and upcoming school year with limited outbreaks.

To register anyone 12 years of age and older to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, visit <https://tinyurl.com/y7reeyst> or call 1-800-478-6599. If you have questions about the vaccine, ask your healthcare provider or visit [www.ykhc.org/vaccine](http://www.ykhc.org/vaccine).

As you know, COVID-19 case rates have declined dramatically across the region as more and more people have become vaccinated. The unvaccinated are still at higher risk for contracting COVID-19, especially those who travel. This has been validated many times as we are now generally seeing only the unvaccinated contracting COVID-19 while traveling outside of the region.

A typical case is an unvaccinated individual traveling outside of the region and then bringing the disease back home and spreading it to other unvaccinated individuals in their household or other unvaccinated individuals that they visit. The solution is easy. Become fully vaccinated. It will protect you, your family and your community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan'.



Katherine Winkelman, Age 15, with her dad, Dan Winkelman: “No side effects, except a big smile all day!”

# COVID-19 UPDATE

During the last two weeks of May, more than 150 children ages 12 to 15 across the YK Delta, including kids from Akiak, Sleetmute, Nunam Iqua and other villages, received their first doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

“We are excited to be able to offer the vaccine to children 12 to 15 years old,” said YKHC’s Chief of Staff Ellen Hodges, who gave Komulainen his COVID-19 vaccine. “Vaccinating children in this age group will help make our schools safer. It also increases the percentage of the total population that has received the vaccine, bringing us closer to our normal ways of life.”

In its application to the FDA for approval of the vaccine for children 12 to 15 years old, Pfizer reported the vaccine was 100 percent effective in preventing COVID-19 infection in this age group. More than 127 million people, including more than 13,000 residents on the YK Delta, have safely received the COVID-19 vaccine so far. Getting vaccinated protects people and communities from COVID-19. It makes opening schools safer.

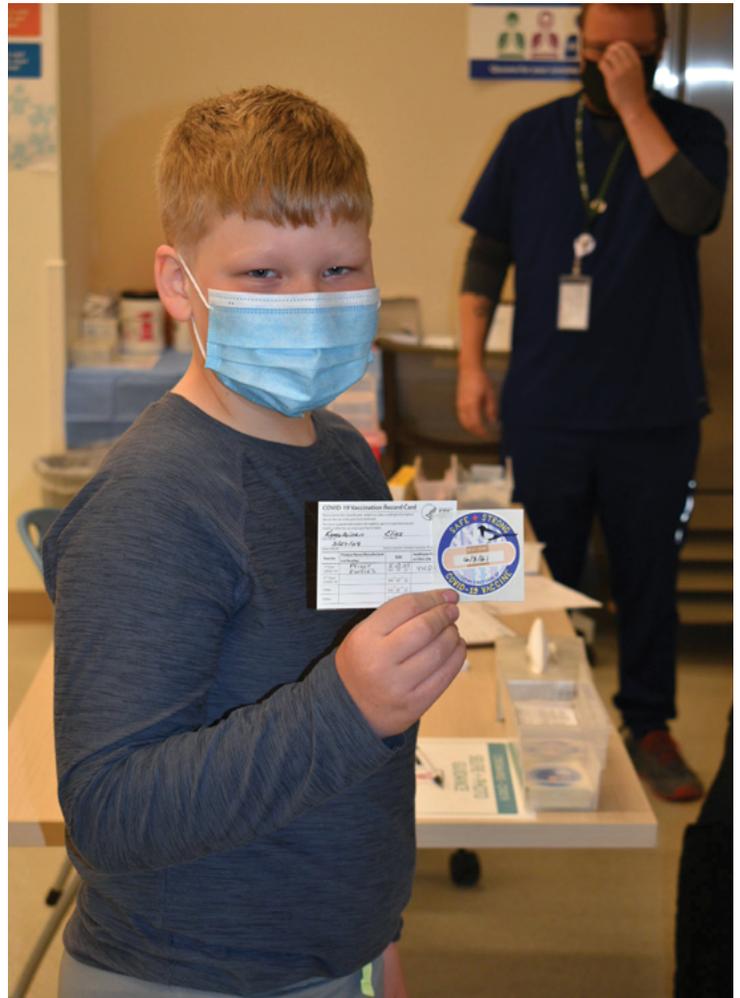
Reopening schools safely is a priority for families, school districts and YKHC. On May 12, YKHC announced it is collaborating with school districts on a plan that supports students safely returning to school full time, in-person this fall, regardless of transmission rates of COVID-19 in the region.

Dr. Hodges indicated several factors have been important to creating a situation where full-time, in-person learning can be safely recommended. These factors include school districts’ successful implementation of testing programs, increasing vaccination rates and decreasing case rates in the YK Delta.

Getting as many eligible people as possible in the region vaccinated against COVID-19 is essential to schools reopening safely, said Hodges. Parents and guardians are encouraged to sign up their children ages 12 and older to receive the vaccine by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/y7reeyst> or by calling 1-800-478-6599.

As schools and communities start to open, YK Delta residents are looking for information on how to safely enjoy activities they love, such as visiting with other families, playing basketball, having a potluck or singing at a worship service. YKHC released guidance May 18 to help communities and individuals make decisions about safely resuming normal activities.

YKHC recommends people consider two key factors to determine how an activity can be done safely: the transmission rate of COVID-19 in the community and the vaccination status of the person.



At 8 a.m., Thursday, May 13, twelve-year-old Elias Komulainen received his COVID-19 vaccine in the Wellness Center on the second floor of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional Hospital in Bethel, making him the first 12-to-15-year old in the YK Delta to receive his shot. The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine received final approval for that age group just the day before.

If a community is experiencing high transmission, YKHC recommends the community go into lockdown. If a community is not in high transmission, vaccinated people can resume most activities they enjoyed prior to COVID-19 without wearing a mask. Vaccinated people should still wear masks while traveling and wherever required by law or regulation. People who are not vaccinated against COVID-19 should wear masks in most public settings and get vaccinated at their first opportunity.

YKHC’s full guidance document, which is based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s updated guidance, can be found at <https://www.ykhc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/051721-community-guidance.pdf>.

# Guidance for YK Delta Communities

## With Low, Moderate or Substantial Transmission of COVID-19

This chart does not apply if there is high transmission of COVID-19 in the community.

| Unvaccinated People  | Examples of Activities  | Fully Vaccinated People   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>OUTDOOR</b>   |   |   |
|    | Walk, run, wheelchair roll, or bike outdoors with members of your household.  |    |
|    | Attend a small, outdoor gathering <i>with fully vaccinated family and friends</i> , including participating in subsistence activities, attending bonfires and playing outdoor sports, such as basketball or soccer      |    |
|    | Attend a small, outdoor gathering <i>with fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people</i> , including participating in subsistence activities, attending bonfires and playing outdoor sports, such as basketball or soccer |    |
|    | Attend outdoor social events with multiple households that may include eating, such as potlucks, graduation parties, birthday celebrations.   |    |
|    | Attend a crowded, outdoor event, like a live performance, parade, or sports event   |    |
| <b>INDOOR</b>  |   |   |
|  | Get a massage or visit a barber or hair salon.  |  |
|  | Shop in the store or attend Saturday market.  |  |
|  | Have indoor play dates between multiple households with a mix of vaccinated and unvaccinated people.  |  |
|  | Go to a movie or a steam bath. Have a sleepover with a mix of vaccinated and unvaccinated people.   |  |
|  | Attend an indoor funeral, baptism or story circle.  |  |
|  | Participate in Yup'ik dancing or attend a full capacity worship service with singing.   |  |
|  | Eat at an indoor restaurant or bar, attend indoor social events with multiple households that may include eating, such as potlucks, graduation parties, birthday celebrations.  |  |
|  | Participate in an indoor, high intensity exercise class, or close contact school sports like wrestling and basketball   |  |

Recently, the U.S. Senate recognized two YKHC employees as Alaskans of the Week. Dr. Elizabeth Bates and Dr. Ellen Hodges were recognized by U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan who read their citation for COVID-19 response into the Congressional Record. Congratulations to both of our teammates for their contributions over this past year!

As we all know, every YKHC employee also contributed to our COVID-19 response and are currently helping to vaccinate everyone 12 years of age and older in the YKHC service area. These efforts were also recently recognized by the Alaska Legislature (next page). Congratulations to all 1,400 employees of YKHC and our Board of Directors for your individual efforts and these recognitions! They are well deserved.

—Dan Winkelman, President & CEO, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 167

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021

No. 40

## Senate TRIBUTE TO DR. ELLEN HODGES AND ELIZABETH BATES

*Great job Ellen & Elizabeth - Dan Sullivan*

Mr. SULLIVAN, Madam President, it is that time of the week that our pages—when we had them—used to always look forward to. It is the time of the week that I come down on the floor and talk about someone in Alaska who is making a huge impact on my State, a lot of times for the country. These two Alaskans I am going to talk about actually have gotten national news for the great work they are doing, somebody we call our Alaskan of the Week. It is usually about a group of individuals, one, two, maybe a group of people who are helping make Alaska what, in my view, is the greatest State in the country—resilient, tough, generous, kind, unique.

Like so many States, this pandemic has really hit Alaska hard—tourism for sure. The oil and gas sector last year was really hit hard with low prices. Unfortunately, this year, with the Biden administration's attacks on this sector of the United States and Alaska's economy, it is tough; commercial fishing, tough. It has been a tough year economically. But an area of good news during the pandemic, one that I am very proud of for all of my constituents, involves how we in Alaska have responded on the health side. Vaccines, testing, death rates—we have consistently been the top State rated in all of these categories throughout the pandemic, which is kind of amazing given that we are a very, very big State with a very small population.

I know that so many Americans watching right now want to get back out, visit Alaska. Our Governor, Mike Dunleavy, recently tweeted:

With the best vaccination efforts [in the country] & some of the lowest COVID numbers in the country, Alaska is open for business... safe for travelers!

So come on, America, get back up to Alaska. Love to have you.

So this is all very true. Our vaccination efforts are viewed as the best in the United States of America, and the great lengths that so many in Alaska have gone through to make it so have captured the country's imagination. These efforts just in the last couple of weeks have been featured all across the country—USA TODAY, "Good Morning America," the Washington Post, the New York Times, a great piece by Bloomberg News, and so many others. So big thanks to the press corps, the national press corps, for featuring my State's efforts and importantly

the heroic work being done to distribute lifesaving vaccines to a State that is more than 2½ times the size of Texas. Sorry there, Senator Cornyn, Senator Cruz. It is true.

Most of the geography of Alaska is dotted with small villages without roads in freezing-cold temperatures. I was in Fairbanks last weekend—just a couple of weeks ago in Fairbanks. It almost hit 40 below. That is cold.

All across Alaska, our healthcare workers are jumping on boats, single-prop airplanes, snow machines, and, yes, in a couple of cases, dog sleds to bring the vaccine and hope to their fellow Alaskans. And it shows.

As of a few days ago, close to 160,000 Alaskans had received at least their first vaccine dose. That is about 21 percent of our State's population.

Now, in Southwest Alaska, what we called the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, or the YK Delta—those are two giant rivers that come together—these efforts have been particularly impressive. That is largely thanks to the amazing people at the YK Health Corporation, or YKHC, which is the YK Delta's Tribal health provider. The whole organization, consisting of just about 90 healthcare professionals, serves around 28,000 people in the YK region, which is about the size of Oregon, so a huge area, not a lot of people.

Prior to the vaccine, the YK Delta had been stricken by COVID-19 with one of the highest infection rates in the country, in a very far-flung place in terms of the dispersal of the population. It is the efforts of two women there in the YK Delta, Drs. Ellen Hodges and Elizabeth Bates, who are our Alaskans of the Week, who have been in charge of getting the vaccine to roughly 50 remote villages in Southwestern Alaska. Spread out over a territory, as I said, about the size of Oregon, the village populations in the YK Delta range from about 1,200 people to as small as 10 in terms of population.

Let's start with Dr. Hodges. She is the chief of staff at YKHC. She grew up in rural Minnesota. After graduating from the University of Minnesota Medical School, Dr. Hodges came to Anchorage as a resident in 2002, eventually making her way to Bethel, which is the hub village. It is a big community, the biggest in the YK Delta. She absolutely fell in love with the area. She said it has everything—very friendly people, authentic. It is beautiful. Soon enough, her

patients turned into her family. Also soon enough, she was—according to Tricia Franklin, Alaska's director of the State Office of Rural Health Division—"the go-to person for how things are working in rural communities" and how to get things done.

She worked in the emergency room tending cuts, bruises, broken bones. She delivered babies. She worked tirelessly to contain a number of tuberculosis outbreaks in the region. And then the virus hit, and as I mentioned, it hit the YK Delta region very hard with some of the highest COVID rates in America.

There are reasons for that: the multigenerational housing, very crowded housing in this region; communal lifestyle; and also—here is a big one, and it should be a shock for every American listening—about 50 percent of the households in this region of America lack running water. Let me say that again. Some of the most patriotic communities in the country, as Alaska Natives serve at higher rates in the military than any other ethnic group in the country, live in communities that don't have running water or flushed toilets—American citizens.

It is wrong. It is wrong. And we need—we the U.S. Senate, Congress—to continue to work on this issue. How do you wash your hands five times a day, as the CDC wants you to do during the pandemic, when you don't have running water or flushed toilets? We need to keep working on this. It is a disgrace, to be honest.

So what happened when COVID hit in this region? Because of a lack of sanitation and many other problems, precious lives were being lost. Elders, who are vital to pass on the traditional wisdom of the Native Alaskan culture and heritage, were being lost. Because of a lack of functioning sanitation, even young people, whom this virus doesn't really impact, were starting to have respiratory illnesses and getting sick, and some were even dying. That is horrible. It was terrifying, particularly for an area that is still dealing with the multigenerational trauma of previous pandemics, particularly the Spanish flu of 1918, which in several Alaskan Native communities wiped out entire communities; 60, 70 percent mortality rates from that flu. So we needed to get to work fast, particularly in this region.

Enter another intrepid doctor and our Alaskan of the Week, Dr. Elizabeth Bates. Dr. Bates arrived in Bethel in December of 2018—just a little over 2 years ago—and she found a community that she loved. She had experience working in women's health and infection control and emergency care and disaster relief. She has great experience across the country—really, across the world. As a doctor, she worked with patients during 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and has spent time even in refugee camps in Rwanda.

In Bethel, she was in charge of setting up testing centers for the region. Working hand in glove with Dr. Hodges, she started one of the first drive-through and airport testing sites in rural Alaska, much of it outside in the cold weather under tarps.

But we all know that testing alone, particularly, as I said, when people are living so closely together and don't live in places where you can wash your hands frequently, wasn't nearly enough. They tried everything—public service announcements, reaching

out to villagers, helping them use bleach to sanitize. It was a 24/7 effort, but, as I said, it wasn't enough. The virus was spreading rapidly. They were losing. People were dying.

Then on December 18, a few days before winter solstice—the darkest day of the year—hope came to Bethel, AK, because the first vaccines arrived. Thanks to the great work of so many scientists, government workers, private sector workers, Operation Warp Speed, the vaccine arrived on December 18 to the YK Delta. These two intrepid doctors I have been talking about cried. They had seen a lot of death and struggles in the region, and like a Christmas miracle, this vaccine arrived. They hugged each other, and then they got to work.

As I said, there are roughly 50 remote villages in the YK Delta spread out over a territory about the size of many States in our country—as a matter of fact, bigger than most States in our country—so they traveled on small planes, trucks, on ice roads, snow machines, dog sleds.

Their operation, Project Togo, is named in reference to one of the famous sled dogs that helped carry the diphtheria serum to Nome, which, of course, is the original inspiration for the Iditarod Sled Dog Race. Sometimes it was so cold that they had to keep the syringes filled with COVID serum under their clothes, lest the serum froze.

The operation that they initiated and organized has hit every single village, all 50 in the YK Delta, bringing the vaccine to pretty much anyone who wants it. In some villages, they have been able to vaccinate as much as half the population. As a result, the numbers of COVID infections and deaths are plummeting in this region, and hope is spreading.

This great team, Drs. Hodges and Bates, as well as all in the community and all working at YKHC, have made a huge difference, and this team has created a special bond that nobody will forget.

Dr. Bates, a relative newcomer to Alaska, says that the experience has made her fall in love with the YK Delta region even more. She bought a home. She intends on staying. She describes the beauty of the region, something that she appreciates even more now, as "Our sky is huge... We have a front-row seat to the entire universe."

These two doctors also have a front-row seat in providing a front-row seat to hope during this pandemic.

So I want to thank both of them again, Dr. Hodges and Dr. Bates, and all those across Alaska who are helping distribute the vaccine.

As I mentioned, right now, Alaska is the No. 1 State in the country per capita in terms of vaccine distribution and the No. 1 State per capita in terms of testing and has one of the lowest death rates. This is really amazing, really, when you see how big and widespread and harsh the weather conditions can be in the great State of Alaska.

Our fellow Alaskans are tough, resilient, and innovative, and Dr. Hodges and Dr. Bates are a huge and essential part of this effort. That is why I want to congratulate them and thank them again for being our Alaskans of the Week.

I yield the floor.



## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

There are several ways to provide feedback:

- After your visit, take the survey for Qless, if you registered on your smart phone.
- E-mail us at [stomer\\_feedback@ykhc.org](mailto:stomer_feedback@ykhc.org)
- Download a feedback form at [www.ykhc.org/comment](http://www.ykhc.org/comment)
- Mail a comment form to P.O. Box 287 Bethel, AK 99559
- Or fax a feedback form to 907-543-6366

# ALASKA LEGISLATURE

## HONORING

### DISTRICT 39 TRIBAL HEALTH CLINICS' EFFORTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The members of the Thirty-Second Alaska State Legislature are pleased to recognize District 39 Tribal health organizations, health clinics and essential workers for their commendable work during the COVID-19 Pandemic to protect elders and their communities. Specifically, we recognize:

**Norton Sound Health Corporation:** Brevig Mission Clinic; Bessie Kaningok Clinic; Norton Sound Regional Hospital; Little Diomede Clinic; Yukuniaraq Yungcarvik Clinic; Irene L. Aukongak "Dagumaaq" Health Clinic; Ruth Qumiiggan Henry Memorial Clinic; Native Village of Savoonga Health Center; Agnes Balla Takak Health Center; Katherine Miksrmaq Olanna Memorial Clinic; Katherine L. Kobuk Memorial Clinic; Tapramiut Yungcarviat Clinic; Teller Clinic; Anikkan Inuit Iluuqataat Sub-Regional Clinic; Toby Anungazuk Sr. Memorial Health Clinic; Natchirsvik Health Clinic. **Tanana Chiefs Conference:** Koyukuk Health Clinic; Nulato Health Clinic; Huslia Health Clinic; Kaltag Health Clinic; Altona Brown Clinic; Edgar Nollner Health Center. **Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation:** Alakanuk Clinic; Chevak Clinic; Pearl E. Johnson Sub-Regional Clinic; Nunam Iqua Clinic; Pilot Station Clinic; Pitkas Point Clinic; Scammon Bay Clinic; John Afcan Memorial Clinic; Hooper Bay Clinic; Kotlik Clinic; Mountain Village Clinic.

On March 11, 2020, Alaska confirmed its first case of COVID-19. Having learned from the past, District 39 Tribal health organizations and local clinics quickly took action to prevent widespread illness and loss of life in their communities. They coordinated with local and State offices to ensure accurate information and other supplies were available locally. They navigated through the Federal emergency funding to provide vital testing, contact tracing, and medical support. Many helped set up quarantine housing for community members to isolate themselves in a safe and supported environment.

The challenges brought on by the pandemic have underscored the tireless courage and resolve of frontline healthcare workers from communities in rural Alaska. As the pandemic progressed and infections spread across the state, alongside other minority groups, Alaska Native people disproportionately faced higher positive cases. Local and regional health organizations were quick to address issues of sanitation, overcrowded homes, and lack of access to water. Personal Protective Equipment, hand sanitizing wipes, and powdered bleach were ordered in bulk for distribution. Water buckets with spigots were provided to homes without access to running water.

Most importantly front-line health care workers provided comfort and care during a time of crisis. For patients isolated in clinics and hospitals, these staff relayed messages from family members not allowed to visit due to physical distancing protocols. They held hands, sang songs, and provided comfort.

Now, as COVID-19 vaccines have been rolled out across the state, Tribal health partners have been integral in supporting Alaska's nationwide leadership in vaccination rates and the early expansion of access to the general public. Local and regional Tribal health organizations have been quiet champions working diligently to calculate complex logistics, charter flights, carry vaccines over frozen ice roads, and ensure not a dose of vaccine goes to waste. They began using their Sovereign Nation Supplement of COVID-19 vaccine to expand eligibility criteria, efficiently offering vaccinations to teachers, frontline essential workers, and residents at-large regardless of Indian Health Service eligibility, well before the State was able to.

The members of the Thirty-Second Alaska State Legislature commend the Tribal health organizations, health clinics, and essential workers of District 39 for their admirable and unflinching support for the well-being of their communities and wish them good health and continued success in the future.



*Louise Stutes*  
LOUISE STUTES  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

*P. Micciche*  
PETER MICCICHE  
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

*Neal Foster*  
REP. NEAL FOSTER  
SPONSOR

*Donny Olson*  
SEN. DONNY OLSON  
CO-SPONSOR

*Lyman Hoffman*  
SEN. LYMAN HOFFMAN  
CO-SPONSOR

Date: April 16, 2021

# HEALTHY LIVING

## MEN'S HEALTH MONTH IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SELF-ASSESS

by Miles Rice, *Diabetes Prevention & Control*

The month of June is set aside to promote Men's Health. I just want to take a minute to help bring awareness to a couple of areas. Although some medical issues are specific to males, we can all be mindful of our health.

### Mental Health

I cannot stress enough how important it is to take care of your mind. Daily life, as well as the added stress of surviving the COVID-19 pandemic, is a lot to handle. All that stress can wear down the mind and lead to anxiety, headaches, weight gain or loss, loss in confidence and more. There is no shame in reaching out to trained professionals who can help give you tools to balance all the emotions. As men, we can often bury a lot of these feelings under the umbrella of "acting like a man," but seeking help doesn't make you lose your man card. So here are a couple of tips that can help manage stress a little better.

- **Find support.** Speak to a doctor, family member, friend, or advisor. Talking about your problems can lighten the burden of stress and help you feel better.
- **Cut back on stressors.** If you're feeling overwhelmed, cut back on your workload or any other commitments to give yourself some time to relax.
- **Stay active.** Go for walks, bike rides, or hit the gym. Exercise lowers stress and anxiety. It can also help you sleep better. Yoga has been shown to be especially beneficial for stress reduction.
- **Set aside time for things you enjoy.** Making time for your hobbies, whether that's reading a book or watching a movie, can help you unwind in times of stress.

### Prostate Exams

Cancer is never fun to talk or think about, but is something that needs to be addressed. According to the American Cancer Society, prostate cancer is the leading form of cancer in men (second only to skin cancer). Prostate cancer begins when cells in the prostate gland start to grow out of control. The prostate is a gland found only in males. As men age, the chances of prostate cancer also rise and because of this it is recommended for men to start getting screenings at the age of 40. Early detection allows for greater chances for treatment to be successful.

While prostate cancer might be unique to men, I encourage everyone to be in tune with your body and consult with your health care team if you feel any lumps or unusual reactions.

### Be Kind

As spring and summer roll around, remember to be kind to your body, starting by watching what you eat and drink. There is no better time to cut back on sugary drinks and foods. Replacing them with water will help you stay hydrated longer and can even help with aches and pains! We only get one body and it's up to us to keep it moving as long as possible.

Source: Dolan, Michael, et al. "June 2020 Is Men's Health Month: Everyday Health." *EverydayHealth.com*, and the Mayo Clinic

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### Salmon Patties

#### Ingredients

- Salmon fillet, skin and bones removed
- 1/2 medium sized onion chopped or minced
- 1/4 cup breadcrumbs or chopped toasted bread
- 2 tablespoons mustard
- 1 egg

#### Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl.
3. Shape salmon mixture into 4 patties.
4. Place patties on greased baking sheet, let cook in the oven for 15-20 minutes.



### HEALTH AIDES OF THE MONTH:

#### December 2020—Linda and Shara Davis, Mekoryuk

“Alone we can do so little; together we can so much.” — Helen Keller

Linda and Shara Davis are a health aide mother-daughter team working in Mekoryuk. Together, they vaccinated 99% of their villages eligible population.

When the COVID-19 vaccine was available for more and more patients, they advocated to the best of their abilities and even offered to help other villages in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta that needed help contacting their eligible patients. What helped them strive for this great achievement was to bring the community back to their normal routines. Keep up the awesome work, ladies!

—Desiree Coffee, SI



Linda and Shara Davis, Mekoryuk Health Aides.

### BOATING SAFETY

As the river has broken up, and summer is just around the corner, it's a good time to review some measures you can take to ensure you stay safe this boating season!

#### Life Jackets Are Essential

Life jackets are at the core of safe boating, whether using a motorized or non-motorized vessel. The U.S. Coast Guard reports 76% of boating deaths in 2017 were due to drowning, and 84% of the victims were not wearing a life jacket.

- Make sure the jacket is a proper fit for your size and weight.
- Make sure the jacket is properly fastened.

#### Get educated, reduce risks

- Be familiar with the boating state laws.
- Know the “Rules of the Road”.
- Be prepared.

#### Before setting out

- Check that your equipment is in good working order.
- Review a pre-departure checklist to ensure you have everything you need in your boat, including a tool kit and first-aid kit.



- Before you leave, always file a float plan with someone you trust.
- Dress properly and bring an extra set of clothes in case you get wet.
- Don't forget the sunscreen and know the signs of heat illnesses.

#### Exercise Good Judgment

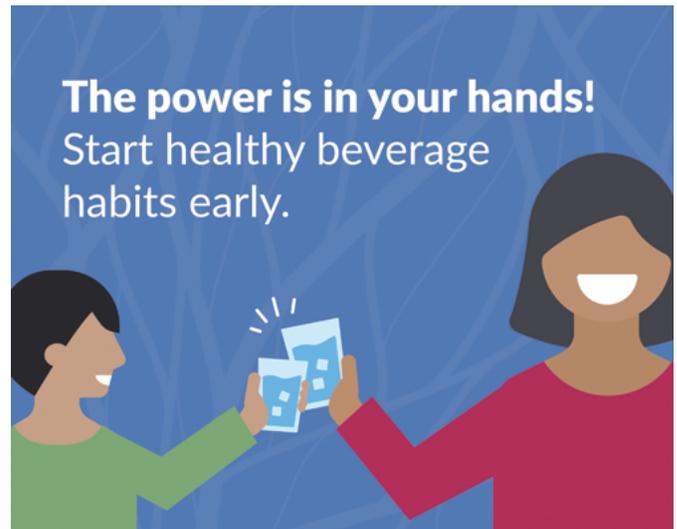
- Respect your limits and keep within your limits to avoid injury.
- Don't drink and drive a boat; alcohol affects judgment, vision, balance and coordination.
- Once on the water, use common sense; in a split second, a situation can arise or the weather can turn.
- If you notice storm clouds, a sudden temperature drop or wind speed increasing, play it safe and get off the water.

## CUT BACK ON SUGARY DRINKS – and see how sweet life can be!

Sugary drinks are the number one source of added sugar in the American diet<sup>1</sup> and the consumption of these beverages increases risk for developing diet related health conditions such as diabetes, obesity, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and cancer<sup>2</sup>.

In fact, drinking just one additional serving of a sugary drink each day increases your risk for developing type II diabetes by 13-18%<sup>3</sup>. In an effort to combat these negative health impacts, YKHC is launching an educational campaign geared towards encouraging folks to drink fewer sugary drinks.

The first ads for this campaign can be found here and on the YKHC facebook page! Stay tuned for additional information, tips, and tricks for drinking fewer sugary drinks and improving the health of you and your family!



Parents can model healthy behavior by keeping sugary beverages out of the house and choosing options like water, tea and flavored seltzer instead. Research shows that healthy habits in childhood have lifelong impacts that help prevent health issues such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease and more.



There's no way to leave it all on the court when sugary sports drinks are slowing you down! Get game ready by drinking water.



Sugar in soda and sweetened drinks promotes tooth decay. 7 out of 10 children in the YK Delta undergo invasive dental procedures due to tooth decay – this is far greater than many other places in the country.

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 8th Edition. December 2015. Available at: [https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/resources/2015-2020\\_Dietary\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/resources/2015-2020_Dietary_Guidelines.pdf)

2. Muth ND, Dietz WH, Magge SN, Johnson RK; American Academy of Pediatrics, Section on Obesity, Committee on Nutrition; American Heart Association. Public policies to reduce sugary drink consumption in children and adolescents. *Pediatrics*. 2019;143:e20190282. Doi: 10.1542/peds.2019-0282

3. Imamura F, O'Connor L, Ye Z, Mursu J, Hayashino Y, Bhupathiraju SN, Forouhi NG. Consumption of sugary-sweetened beverages, artificially sweetened beverages, and fruit juice and incidence of Type 2 diabetes: systematic review, meta-analysis, and estimation of population attributable fraction. *BMJ*. 2015; 351. Doi: 10.1136/bmj.h3576

## WHO'S COMING TO A CLINIC NEAR YOU?

The following providers will be bringing healthcare services closer to your home in the coming months. To schedule an appointment time, contact your village health clinic.

Dates are subject to change dependent on weather or other scheduling issues.

### June

#### Dental

**Marshall:** Dr. Davis, Gwen, Wilma + 2 assistants ..... 6/7-11  
**Pilot Station:** Renee Cheemuk, DHAT with 2 DA's..... 6/14-18  
**Hooper Bay:** Janette Ulak, DHAT..... 6/21-25

#### Family Medicine:

**Pilot Station-:** Susan Dunbar, WHNP ..... 6/1-3  
**Chevak:** Sandy Beeman, PAC ..... 6/7-10  
**Upper Kalskag:** Colleen Britt, FNP & CHAP ..... 6/7-10  
**Scammon Bay:** Erin Abston, PA-C ..... 6/14-17  
**Russian Mission:** Rachael Youngblood, FNP & CHAP..... 6/14-17  
**Kotlik:** David Gonzales, FNP ..... 6/21-25

#### Optometry

**Kipnuk:** Kalistook and 3 staff ..... 6/1-4  
**Tununak:** Dr Conrad +3 ..... 6/7-11  
**Marshall:** Penaflor +3 ..... 6/14-18  
**Pilot Station:** BLum + 3 ..... 6/21-25  
**Upper/Lower Kalskag:** Lucatero +3 ..... 6/28-7/2

#### Physical Therapy

**Kotlik:** Amy Spatz..... 6/3-4

**Toksook:** Eliza Cagjioa, PT ..... 6/7-9  
**Mtn. Village:** Eliza Cagjioa ..... 6/10-11  
**Marshall:** Jesse Gefroh, PT..... 6/15-17

#### WIC

**Scammon Bay:** Bertha Chase, Henry Batchelor ..... 6/2-3

### July

#### Dental

**Hooper Bay:** Janette Ulak, DHAT ..... 7/12-16

#### August

**Hooper Bay:** Janette Ulak, DHAT ..... 8/2-6

#### Optometry

**Anvik:** Kalistook +3 ..... 7/6-9

#### Family Medicine

**Scammon Bay:** Erin Abston, PA-C ..... 7/12-16

#### Physical Therapy

**St. Mary's:** Eliza Cagjioa ..... 7/12-14

**Mtn. Village:** Eliza Cagjioa ..... 7/15-16

#### August

#### Dental

**Hooper Bay:** Janette Ulak, DHAT ..... 8/2-6

**Hooper Bay:** Janette Ulak, DHAT ..... 8/16-20

#### Family Medicine

**Alakanuk:** David Gonzales, FNP ..... 8/16-20

Effective June 4, YKHC will change the hours for COVID-19 testing. Testing will be available at the Alaska Airline terminal only for flights arriving at noon Monday through Friday. There will not be testing at the terminal on the weekends or for the 7 p.m. flight, Monday through Friday.

In Bethel, walk-in COVID-19 Binax testing is available on the first floor of the hospital between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through

Friday. Patients should enter through the main hospital doors (not the emergency room entrance) and indicate they are interested in a COVID test.

"Close contacts" and people showing symptoms of COVID-19 can schedule testing by calling 543-6949. In villages, please call your local clinic.