

“The Council has extended well-deserved recognition to the Navajo Nation’s first responders who have sacrificed their time, health and, in some cases, their lives to keep our people safe from the most drastic effects of this pandemic,” said Speaker Damon. “Today, and in the days and weeks that follow the holiday, we have to do more, individually, to reduce the risk of spread. We can help those on the front lines by taking these proven steps to reduce the chances this deadly virus overloads our health care facilities.”

On Wednesday, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee of the 24th Navajo Nation Council heard from the Indian Health Service (IHS) updates on the rising number of Covid-19 cases and potential vaccines.

“You see the counties in New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Colorado, most of them are red,” said Dr. Thierry Va, referencing the national risk map for Covid-19 infection by county. On the Navajo Nation, Dr. Va stated: “We know at this point that between 638 facilities and IHS facilities, they are reaching crisis capacity. Our staffed beds are getting full.

Dr. Jill Moses stressed the importance of answering calls from public health workers who are performing contact tracing work after an individual has been confirmed positive with Covid-19. “There are places and some individuals that are reluctant to share information with the public health team when they call to do their contact tracing work. A contact tracing is really a key piece for protecting families in the community. It’s done in a way that protects confidentiality.”

Chief Medical Officer Dr. Loretta Christiansen provided additional guidance that all members of the public should receive flu vaccinations by December 15. Although no Covid-19 vaccine has been approved for distribution by the federal government, IHS recommends not overlapping the two vaccinations in the same 14-day period.

Further information about Covid-19 on the Navajo Nation can be found at the Navajo Department of Health’s website at: <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>.

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