

Yukon Legislative Assembly
FD 35-1-12
October 13, 2021

Yukon Legislative Assembly

Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

August 31, 2021

Hon. Sandy Silver
Premier of Yukon
Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 2C6

Dr. Catherine Elliot
Acting Chief Medical Officer of Health
1191 Front Street
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 3T8

Re: Covid Questions from Yukoners

Dr Elliot, Mr. Silver,

Since the lifting of most restrictions in August and the end of provisions under the *Civil Emergency Measure Act*, my office has been receiving enquiries from folks around the territory. They have questions and concerns, and have had no luck finding answers.

My office made a list of the most "frequently asked questions and concerns" we receive. I would appreciate detailed answers to these so we can start replying to people with more information.

Regarding children and schools:

- Why did the government choose not to wait until children under 12 were able to get vaccinated to lift most restrictions?
- How many children under 12 have been infected with COVID-19 so far in the Yukon?
- How is the government planning on supporting parents who decide not to send their unvaccinated children to school?
- How is the government planning on supporting parents when disruption happens in schools because of outbreaks?

- Canada-wide data as of July 31, 2021 shows that nearly 90% of cases are in the unvaccinated group. Knowing that children are among the unvaccinated, which protections and safety measures will be put in place to protect them?
- What specific protections has the government put in place, and/or is planning to put in place to protect children at school? Will the mask mandate be at the discretion of school councils? Which standards will be required for air circulation in classrooms/schools? How will the government make sure schools have the tools and means to implement safety standards?
- What is the government doing to make sure that improved ventilation is implemented within schools, daycares, long term care homes and correctional facilities?
- Knowing that Yukon government employees are restricted from travelling outside of the territory, how will school trips outside of the territory take place?

Regarding *Forging Ahead*:

- The statement "*rising vaccination rates in Canada and low COVID-19 activity have substantially reduced the risk to the Yukon of imported cases*" seems to be very confusing for people. Our neighbors in BC and Alberta are grappling with yet another wave of COVID, and BC has reintroduced masks requirements indoors, including in schools. Yukoners are very concerned about potential importations from down South and cannot see how this statement makes sense. Could you please explain the rationale behind that statement?
- In Pillar 2, you state that "*the territory's population remains susceptible to COVID-19 and the associated risk of straining public health and acute care systems*". Some of the people who have been contacting us have been in a place where their health condition is not improving or is slowly deteriorating because of unavailability of regular care. Some of them have been waiting to have routine or health related procedures deemed as less urgent for over a year now. How will you make sure to balance the needs of COVID patients with other medical needs?

Regarding Yukon First Nations:

- What number of the cases and the fatalities to date were among Yukon's First Nations?
- With the repeal of CEMA, how does the government plan to support First Nations governments as the Yukon faces community spread of COVID across the territory?

Regarding the Delta variant:

- Knowing that the Delta variant is much more infectious than the original virus, what are the projections for community infections now that Delta variant has entered the Yukon?
- What are the expected numbers of Delta cases in the territory, and what would be the theoretical threshold of Delta cases to re-implement restrictions such as indoor masking?

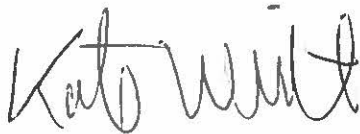
Regarding restrictions and long-term planning:

- How will the quarantine requirement for people testing positive for COVID be enforced?
- Will there be rapid testing available/required for all individuals entering the territory (land and air)?
- Is the government exploring mandatory vaccination for public employees, institutions such as schools, daycares, care homes, hospital, or correctional facilities?

Please also let me know where people who are seeking information regarding vulnerable people, protections for unvaccinated children and details regarding measures in schools, as Yukon.ca does not address these issues. I would appreciate a direct contact as many people who have contacted us have tried sending several emails already and have had no luck getting answers.

I look forward to your detailed response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate White". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate White
Leader of the Yukon NDP
MLA Takhini Kopper-King