

# Daily Updates

## Chairman, Dr. Reynolds discuss case increase from small gatherings

By Zachary N. Dunaiski

Kevin Dupuis Sr., FDL Chairman, and Dr. Charity Reynolds, Medical Director, addressed the FDL public on Friday Oct. 16 about the state of the pandemic on the Fond du Lac Reservation, including the positive tests of two new COVID-19 cases last week.

Fond du Lac's leadership has done a wonderful job during this pandemic of not leaving the membership in the dark. They have constantly been on the radio, Facebook, and this newspaper's daily updates and monthly issues, letting people know what they know and what they've learned from meeting with state and federal officials and leaders in the medical world. On Friday, the chairman began his portion of the public service announcement to let the community know that how Fond du Lac has been handling this and keeping the number of cases so low.

"I would like to address the issue of the consistency of wearing a mask, staying six feet apart, maintaining that social distance, also the cultural aspects that we have with ceremonies, especially feasts and funerals," Chairman Dupuis said. "We have a protocol set in place for the funerals as it is now is having them outside with immediate family, 10 people or less. It is important that we push these issues and we try to maintain that. It's not about giving up your culture."

That's an important thing to remember. This whole pandemic feels like we've all had to give something up, but that doesn't mean that just because we have to do things differently we are changing our culture. Fond du Lac, and Native communities all over the country, have shown how resilient they are over the last 500 years. This is no different, and when this pandemic is over, we will bring back our gatherings, our traditions, and enjoy them the way we always have.

Dr. Reynolds also spoke outside with the chairman on the increase in cases around the country.

"We've seen an increase in cases. It's actually an increase in cases of small gatherings," Dr. Reynolds said about what medical experts have noticed in the recent surge of cases, which saw 70,058 new cases on Friday, the day she delivered this PSA. "That has been the trend in the United States and in our state as well. Anyone who is not of your household has the potential of being infected."

In the last week, Minnesota has seen 8,822 new cases, ranking Minnesota as the 14th most infectious state in that time span. Fond du Lac, which did see two new cases late last week, hadn't had a positive case of a Band member since September 15, about a month earlier. Dr. Reynolds addressed that increase and stated why FDL leadership and medical professionals think the next several months may be the

hardest.

"We really want you to just be safe. We want the community to be safe. There are surges happening in the state, there are surges happening right now as we're going into the holidays, so please continue to be cautious, keep your circle small," Dr. Reynolds suggested of Band members, their families, and everyone who is part of the FDL community.

The other reason the next few months will be difficult is the reason that most early fall seasons are challenging to families health wise.

"Remember, the flu is coming. There was an article yesterday that the hospital is already at capacity and with the flu season coming that means that more people are going to get sick and go to the hospital," Dr. Reynolds reminded the community. "There might not be a place in the hospital for us if we get sick we might have to get sent down to the cities or farther or maybe even out of state. That is going to be really difficult."

Everyone should get a flu shot every year to keep ourselves and those around us safe too,

and to help protect those that can't get a flu shot.

"So please remember to get your influenza vaccine. We're having clinic drives, you can get it at the clinic, please, please get your influenza vaccine so that we can control the spread of all these illnesses," Dr. Reynolds said. "And like the chairman said, we're going to get through this together."

Source: [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases\\_cas-esinlast7days](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_cas-esinlast7days)

The Human Services Division would like to thank our patients for their understanding as we navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic.

We understand that rescheduling appointments can cause inconvenience for all of those involved. The COVID-19 situation is ever-changing, and we must continue to follow proper protocols to keep our patients, staff, and community safe.

We appreciate your patience and apologize to all of those affected.

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