



April 13, 2021

Mr. Tim Syer
President
Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce
#21 4802 50TH AVENUE
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 1C4

Ms. Deneen Everett
Executive Director
Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce
#21 4802 50TH AVENUE
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 1C4

Dear Mr. Syer and Ms. Everett:

Transparent Process for Easing Restrictions Within the NWT

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) acknowledges the strain that public health measures have put on northern businesses. We recognize that the business community has been adaptive and resilient in the face of considerable uncertainty and has continued to play a critical role in keeping our residents safe from COVID-19. The economic and social recovery of our territory is a priority for the GNWT's pandemic response and we are working hard to give every business the best opportunity for success.

Emerging Wisely is the GNWT's guide to a measured, step-by-step approach to lifting restrictions on residents, businesses and communities, while limiting the spread of COVID-19. The pandemic situation has evolved since Emerging Wisely was first developed. There are two key evolutions that were not anticipated in the original plan:

- vaccinations were approved for distribution to NWT residents before control of virus transmissions was achieved nationally and internationally; and
- the rapid transmission rate outside the NWT has caused new and concerning variant strains of SARS-CoV2.

Our approach to keep northerners safe must adapt to rapidly changing circumstances and new risks. As northern public health officials determine a safe way forward that aligns with the emerging scientific evidence, we still need to better understand:

- the effectiveness of vaccines in preventing the transmission of COVID-19;

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- when a vaccine will be approved in Canada for administration to everyone, so that existing measures maintained to protect children under 18 and others can be relaxed; and
- how well vaccines protect against the newly identified variants of COVID-19.

The Chief Public Health Officer has committed to updating Emerging Wisely over the month of April. The GNWT will continue to update the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce and its members as a revised plan is released. The GNWT will provide northern businesses with the guidance they need to effectively plan for the next steps in our pandemic response as soon as specific guidance based on current scientific evidence is available.

Sincerely,


Caroline Cochrane
Premier

- c. Honourable Julie Green, Minister of Health and Social Services
- Honourable Caroline Wawzonek, Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment
- Mr. Kevin O'Reilly, MLA, Frame Lake
- Ms. Katrina Nokleby, MLA, Great Slave
- Ms. Caitlin Cleveland, MLA, Kam Lake
- Mr. Rylund Johnson, MLA, Yellowknife North
- Ms. Shaleen Woodward, Principal Secretary
- Mr. Martin Goldney, Secretary to Cabinet/Deputy Minister, Executive and Indigenous Affairs
- Ms. Pamela Strand, Deputy Minister, Industry, Tourism and Investment
- Mr. Russell Neudorf, Associate Deputy Minister, COVID-19 Coordinating Secretariat