

Fort Resolution residents concerned after resident of community tests positive for coronavirus: SAO

Written By: John McFadden

At least some residents of the South Slave community of Fort Resolution are fearful after a resident of the community tested positive for COVID-19. That is according to the community's Senior Administrative Officer (SAO) Tom Beaulieu.

He told the Dene Nation that it is his understanding that the person has been medevacked to Stanton Territorial Hospital for treatment.

The Health and Social Services Department has not officially confirmed where the patient resides, but Fort Resolution Chief Louis Balsillie has confirmed for media outlets that the person is in fact from Res.

Beaulieu says it is strongly felt that the patient contracted the virus while travelling outside the Northwest Territories, and not from any sort of community spread.

The person is the fifth in the NWT to be diagnosed with the virus which has led to the coronavirus being deemed a world-wide pandemic.

"There are concerns in Fort Resolution that the person may have spread the virus to others in the community. There are concerns for an elder who may have done some work in the person's building but from what I understand the work was done in a different part of the building," Beaulieu said. "From what I can gather people are afraid. People are afraid there may be more cases in the community. Some might say they are scared about what could happen. I would say that some people are even angry that the person came into the community without quarantining first."

Beaulieu was reluctant however to offer any specific advice from his office to residents of the community.

He did say however that this is not a time to panic. Beaulieu says that people should continue to follow the advice of the NWT's Chief Public Health Officer.

Dr. Kami Kandola has been telling residents to stay home, self-isolate and only leave their homes if it is absolutely necessary. She has also advised that people not gather in groups and to wash your hands several times a day.

Beaulieu says he is confident that the vast majority of residents in the community of about 550 people are following her advice.