So now what...
Returning to group singing – Aug 2020
NWT STATS

33 communities in 1.14 m sq kms
Population: Approx 45,000
Percentage indigenous = 50%
11 different official languages

Capital City: Yellowknife
Population: 21,000+
24% are Indigenous
PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES

• Border controls
• 14 day quarantine
• Mask mandates
• Indoor and outdoor group limits
• Prohibition on group activities – depending on risk
• Prohibition on indoor group singing
• Wastewater testing; access to rapid tests; early access to vaccines
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Discuss</strong></th>
<th><strong>Risk</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identify</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mitigations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Don’t forget</strong></td>
<td>your choir’s goals (ie. Have fun, make music, create community)</td>
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The Risks of Singing

- Covid spreads through close contacts & aerosol spread
- Aerosols are created while singing
- Longer rehearsals = more aerosols created & more exposure
- The more people singing = more aerosols created
- The smaller the space = the more aerosols will be collected
- The lower the ventilation = aerosols will linger longer
- The closer the singers = easier to share air
What is the current risk?

- Local case counts
- Level of community transmission
- Level of vaccination (by age, region, demographics?)
- Existing public health measures or directions?
- Status of virus nationally? globally?
Where to get data

- **COVID-19 daily epidemiology update - Canada.ca**
- Links to P/T case counts, vaccination levels, directives
What risks need to be addressed

Close proximity

Production of droplets & aerosols

The impact of exposure
Remedies for close contact:

- 6 feet between everyone (no more cramped risers!)
- Face forward in staggered placements
- Stay 12 feet from choir director (who can wear face shield) & masked accompanist
- Always wear a mask
- Be in a larger venue
- Manage / reduce the # of singers together
Remedies to reduce production of viral particles:

• Reduce length of rehearsal
• Do more non-singing activities
• Humm more
• End rehearsal with concentrated singing
• Have your own music, pencil (no sharing)
• No snacks
Remedies to reduce impact

1. Assess venue’s air flow (size, ventilation systems)

2. Hand sanitizer will be provided & handwashing in bathroom

3. Anyone feeling sick should stay home

4. Gather singer attendance & contact tracing info

5. Consider pre & post rehearsal cleaning protocols
Wildcards:

- Variants of Concern (VOC)
- Vaccination – low / uneven uptake
- Misinformation
Vaccination – mandatory or strongly encouraged?

• How will you apply this?
• Can you do so in an equitable way?
June 23, 2021

We ... support public health education efforts ... that encourage all persons to become vaccinated.

We recommend that unvaccinated ... singers continue to follow COVID-19 prevention and mitigation practices ... in indoor public areas. These include ... the use of masks, physical distancing, increased ventilation, reduced contact time, regular cleaning of common surfaces, and vigorous hand washing.
June 25, 2021
National Guidance
“Vaccinated Against COVID-19? What does it mean to me”

Vaccin-Status-June25-EN-1241pm (documentcloud.org)
**SETTING OR ACTIVITY**  
(Always follow local guidelines for gatherings and public health measures)

Indoors or outdoors in a large crowd where people are closely gathering  

*e.g. crowded concert, organized sporting event, house party*

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**YOU ARE NOT VACCINATED OR PARTIALLY VACCINATED**

Wear a mask  
Follow the measures put in place by the owner/organizer to reduce the risk of COVID-19  
Maintain physical distancing wherever possible  
Consider only attending events where there are safety plans in place that follow local public health advice

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**YOU ARE FULLY VACCINATED**  
(i.e. you have received the full series of a vaccine authorized in Canada at least 14 days ago)

If you are at risk of more severe disease or outcomes, consider wearing a mask and maintain physical distancing. Even if you are not at risk, you may still consider wearing a mask at an indoor crowded setting  
Follow the measures put in place by the owner/organizer to reduce the risk of COVID-19

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*Always follow good practices like washing your hands, covering your coughs and sneezes and improving ventilation.*  
You should not be in close contact with others if you have symptoms that could be COVID-19, even if vaccinated.
What is your group’s specific risk?

- Local virus situation
- Rehearsal Location
- Age of choristers
- Size of group
- Individual risk factors
- Risk tolerance
Singer input? Here’s why

- Engage them in the process & build confidence
- Gauge intentions (to sing, to adjust, to vaccinate)
- Collect data on singer risk factors & risk tolerance
- Inform & manage expectations
- Gauge support for your plan
Singer survey - format

• Anonymous or not?
• Platform – Google forms? Survey monkey?
• Be clear (do a limited test run to ensure the responses make sense)
• Collect info need and not more

• Our surveys are here:
  https://forms.gle/RA31jiUCWj6MK3Yu6 (June 2020) and
  https://forms.gle/BCNkCMiNC5XUKAUYZ7 (April 2021)
Refine your plan

- Incorporate survey data
- Confirm mitigation measures & rationale
- Outline obligations for singers / Board
- Include details on season logistics
Review registration materials

• Create, Update & Revise as necessary
• Written plan?
• Singer Commitment to safety?
• Worker’s compensation/safety documentation?
• Waiver?
• Other CPHO requirements?
New (?)
Admin
Requirements
to be decided...

Singers must register before attending?

Are there new singer commitments?

Use Health self-assessment BEFORE EACH rehearsal?
https://forms.gle/na5Dkojo3Jc1DCrz8

Use digital sign up before arrival? https://signup.com

Use seating plan?

What records will be kept, how and by who?
Seek Singer
Buy-in

Connect in advance – in person / Zoom → Share relevant survey results

Outline new roles for Board and for singers → Highlight the priorities and the changes

Expect and respect mixed feelings
We asked singers to commit to:

- keep each other safe
- apply the new health & safety rules
- and...
- Be brave
Highlight singers new roles …
#1: educate yourself

• Materials are provided with registration materials
  • Obligations
  • Declaration
  • Waiver (*)

• Singers’ Website – create a new folder with links to Covid materials, science, reliable info
If singers feel sick?

Fell sick before rehearsal?  Stay home!

Feel sick after?  Contact your local health authority

- Public Health will notify the Board if a singer does test positive
- Names & contact info for singers at risk of exposure will be provided

The CPHO will decide if other singers need to isolate for any length of time.
Be prepared for sudden changes

Anticipate increased anxiety if situation changes

Review your protocols - do they measure up to the change?

Reach out -- let them know how the change affects them - if at all

Be timely

Be clear & consistent

Be available
What did we learn?

• Our registrations remain consistent with previous years.
• Singers were committed and so grateful.
• About 50% of singers found it hardest to adjust to distanced singing – it felt lonely
• About 30% found it hardest to adjust to humming & only singing for 30 mins
• About 21% found it hardest to adjust to singing in a mask
And maybe soon.