

FEBRUARY 18, 2021

HEALTH ADVISORY

COVID-19 Vaccine Breakthrough Cases

The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) is requesting health care providers' assistance in identifying suspected COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough cases. This assistance will help in identifying trends or clusters in patient characteristics, the administered vaccine, or strain.

CDC is defining a COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough case as an individual who is PCR or antigen positive on a respiratory specimen collected ≥ 14 days after completing the series of an FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccine. COVID-19 cases that occur less than 14 days after completion of the series is likely occurring before the individual could mount a full immune response. Regardless of vaccination status these individuals should still isolate themselves following a positive COVID-19 result.

As vaccine becomes more readily available providers should start assessing vaccination status of individuals being tested for COVID-19. Facilities that identify suspected COVID-19 breakthrough cases should hold those specimens. The NDDoH will be reaching out to facilities to request those specimens for whole genome sequencing (WGS), if indicated and the specimen meets the criteria for WGS. Providers are currently unable to order WGS and should not send samples without approval.

NDDoH has not identified any COVID-19 breakthrough cases in North Dakota. More information about currently authorized COVID-19 vaccine can be found on the [NDDoH COVID-19 Vaccine Information Page](#). Questions regarding COVID-19 breakthrough cases should be directed to the NDDoH Division of Disease Control at 701-328-2378 or 800-472-2180.

Categories of Health Alert Network messages:

Health Alert Requires immediate action or attention; highest level of importance
Health Advisory May not require immediate action; provides important information for a specific incident or situation
Health Update Unlikely to require immediate action; provides updated information regarding an incident or situation
HAN Info Service Does not require immediate action; provides general public health information