Central Michigan
District Health Department
Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities

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PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

To: Local News Media

From: Central Michigan District Health Department

RE: Case Counts Increase, Take Precautions This Fall

Release Date: Immediately (October 19, 2020)

In the past month, Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) has seen an increase in cases of COVID-19. As of Monday, October 19, CMDHD has reported 1471 confirmed cases and 218 probable cases of COVID-19 since March 2020. District data shows that in the second week of October, there was a 150% increase in the number of COVID-19 cases CMDHD investigated compared to the average number of cases that CMDHD investigated each week starting in June. Hospitalization rates have also increased by 50% since the start of October compared to previous months.

As we continue into the fall season, and our days and nights get colder, many of us will find ourselves spending more time indoors than outdoors. It is important that we continue to help keep ourselves, our families, and our communities safe and healthy. Let us do our part to help reduce the risk of getting or spreading both COVID-19 and flu this season:

- Stay at home when you are sick and do your best to keep yourself away from other members of your household. Please do not go to school, work, or events/social gatherings if you are sick. Arrange for groceries and medicine to be delivered to your house when you are sick.
- We are asking that if you find out that you are positive for COVID-19, please try to call your close contacts as soon as possible to let them know. An infected person can spread COVID-19 starting 48 hours (2 days) before the person has symptoms or tests positive.[1] Positive individuals should follow home isolation guidelines and close contacts should follow quarantine guidelines. By choosing to isolate or quarantine, you are protecting the health of others in the community.
- About 40% of people are asymptomatic (do not have symptoms) but are still capable of spreading the virus. Therefore, it is important for everyone to follow safety protocols as much as possible.
- Close contacts of confirmed and probable cases might be notified through the Trace Force system which is a statewide system that partners with local health departments. This might take up to a couple of days; therefore, if you are told by a family member, friend, co-worker or employer that you may be a

close contact, please start quarantining right away, and do not wait for a phone call. Once you receive a phone call, further instructions will be given.

- If you receive a phone call from local or state health department staff or volunteers, we ask that you answer the phone and provide as much information as possible. It is important for us to get information quickly and accurately to reduce the risk of others becoming infected.
- Refrain from hosting or attending gatherings that do not follow proper spatial distancing, especially if they do not comply with the current epidemic orders.
- Wear a face covering or mask when you are in an indoor public place or in crowded outdoor areas. Wearing a face covering can help reduce the spread of COVID-19 by about 70%.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least twenty seconds.
- Keep a physical distance of 6 feet or more when you are inside or outside.
- Cover coughs and sneezes; avoid touching your face.
- Clean/disinfect all "high touch" surfaces every day with household cleaning spray or wipes.
- Everyone, ages 6 months and above, should get a flu shot this year. It is possible that both COVID-19 and the seasonal flu could be circulating at the same time.
- If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider for medical advice. An automated self-checker is also available to help you make decisions and seek appropriate medical care. Also, testing locations can be found by visiting www.michigan.gov/coronavirustest or by calling 211.
- Get your information from credible sources, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, or your local health department.

Central Michigan District Health Department has a Coronavirus message center. After hours, please call 989-773-5921 extension 1444 if you have any questions. Leave your name, phone number, county of residence, and a brief message. Staff will return calls as soon as possible. Businesses can also use this message center to report positive cases to the local health department.

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org, LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @CMiDHD.

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To request an interview, please visit our website (cmdhd.org) and fill out the Media Interview Request Form.

1 https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html