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: CMDHD UTILIZING NEW SYSTEM FOR COVID-19 CASE NOTIFICATION AND INVESTIGATION

Release Date: December 10, 2021

CMDHD Utilizing Secure Texting System for COVID-19 Case Notification and Contact Tracing

CMDHD is using TigerConnect software to communicate securely with individuals in the community.

Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) is utilizing TigerConnect, a secure text message notification system, to inform individuals of positive COVID-19 test results and begin contact tracing. "This new system allows us to utilize technology to streamline our contact tracing efforts as our communities continue to deal with an increase in COVID-19 cases," stated CMDHD Health Officer Steve Hall. "At this time, we do not have the capacity to call each case in a timely manner. This system allows us to quickly notify people and begin the contact tracing process. We are also able to provide education regarding close contacts, quarantine and isolation, in addition to providing information about treatment options to avoid potential hospitalization or more serious progression of the virus."

Individuals will be sent a text stating that the user has "a secure message from Communicable Disease Division of Central Michigan District Health Department." The text will contain a link allowing the recipient to enter a chat discussion. For security purposes, date of birth will be required to enter the chat. Once in the chat, the individual will be able to view a message that either requests that they reply to the case investigator with a preferred callback time or provides links to education and a case investigation survey. This survey prompts the user only for information allowable under the Public Health Code and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) Privacy Act, such as demographics, symptoms, occupation, attendance at public events or gatherings, and people with whom they may have been in close contact. The survey does not gather any private information like social security numbers, personal passwords, or banking details.

The TigerConnect system also allows confidential two-way communication between a positive case and a case investigator, which provides an opportunity for the case investigator to quickly answer any questions the

individual may have. It is important to note that a positive case may still receive a call from a case investigator prior to receiving or responding to the text message, and we ask that everyone reply to the text message to save time. If anyone has any questions or we do not get a reply to the text message, CMDHD staff will still attempt to call every person who tests positive for COVID-19. If anyone has questions about this new process or about COVID-19, please call your local health department office.

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.