



MEDIA CONTACT:
Erin Luckhardt, PIO
O: 231-347-5628
e.luckhardt@nwhealth.org
www.nwhealth.org

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Health Department of Northwest Michigan COVID-19 Daily Update

Yesterday Director Robert Gordon of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) issued an order declaring COVID-19 as an epidemic status in Michigan. This order included mandates for labs and hospitals reporting information related to positive cases and requires labs and providers to follow prioritization guidelines for testing.

Over the past week, the Health Department has had requests for specific cities or more exact locations of positive cases. With changes in testing and community spread, the most important message we would like to communicate is: COVID-19 is already spreading through our communities. Therefore, it is imperative to follow the Governor's *Stay Home, Stay Safe* whenever possible.

Medical Director, Dr. Josh Meyerson, shared that "we all need to consider that there is a risk of exposure when we leave our residence. We can all take responsibility to reduce the spread of illness in our communities so that our healthcare systems are not overburdened."

Remaining at home is especially important for individuals who are considered high-risk – people age 65 and over, those with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, those who have serious heart conditions, those who are immunocompromised including cancer treatment, those of any age with severe obesity or certain underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as those with diabetes, renal failure, or liver disease might also be at risk.

For those who need assistance, 211 and the Health Department's Community Connections are both valuable resources.

As of 4:00pm, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan is reporting positive COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Antrim – 0; Charlevoix – 4; Emmet – 2; Otsego – 6. The State of Michigan has reported 2,295 cases and 43 deaths.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.

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