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Michigan is flattening the curve, but it's not business as usual

Ithaca, Stanton, St. Johns- Last Friday the Governor lengthened her stay-at-home order through May 15, while relaxing restrictions so some businesses can re-open and the public can participate in outdoor activities like golf and motorized boating.

According to the Governor, Michigan cases are plateauing, which means that the "Stay home, stay safe" order is working. She went on to say that while lifting some restrictions is a step in the right direction, we all need to continue doing our part by staying home to help prevent a devastating second wave.

The Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) has been working hard to help flatten the curve by closely monitoring all positive cases and following up with their close contacts. Communicable Disease Nurses monitor close contacts for 14 days from the last day they came in contact with the COVID-19 positive patient and ask them to self-quarantine at home for up to 14 days.

As of today, Clinton County has had 114 cases of COVID-19 and 9 deaths, Gratiot County has had 10 cases and 1 death and Montcalm County has had 33 cases and 1 death.

In MMDHDs jurisdiction, females make up the majority of COVID-19 cases at 59%. The age group most affected in MMDHDs jurisdiction is those 20-49 years of age (39%,) followed by those 50-74 (32%), those 75 and over (25%) and those from birth to age 19 (4%). Additional information can be found at www.mmdhd.org.

"COVID-19 continues to circulate throughout Michigan," said Marcus Cheatham, MMDHD Health Officer. "This means when we mingle with people, we will be passing on the disease. Therefore, opening up does not mean business as usual. It means some business and recreational activities can resume, providing strict social distancing is followed."

Last week the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services expanded testing criteria. Those with minor symptoms and essential workers who are not showing symptoms are now eligible to get tested, with an order from a health care provider.

"Testing remains critical to our efforts to slow the spread of the virus," said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, MDHHS chief medical executive and chief deputy for health. "Increased testing helps us understand where this disease is so we can identify people at highest risk and make sure we are quickly implementing best practices for preventing further cases and deaths."

2- Pandemic Update

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, dry cough and shortness of breath. However, someone may have COVID-19 if they have at least two of the following symptoms: fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat or new loss of taste or smell. Those experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should isolate themselves to avoid spreading their illness to others and contact their healthcare provider for guidance.

If your healthcare provider is not available, you may contact the testing site nearest you at www.michigan.gov/coronavirus to see if you can get an order for testing. According to Dr. Khaldun, if you meet the testing criteria, and you're told you don't need a test or one isn't available, it may mean that the testing site does not have the supplies needed to test. In this situation, you are encouraged to visit the online test site locator and call the nearest site regarding next steps.

The COVID-19 test is free for most people. Many insurance providers are waiving copays, and those with Medicaid or Healthy Michigan Plan also have no cost.

Everyone can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by practicing the following:

- wash your hands often for 20 seconds with soap and water
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing
- avoid handshakes
- keep at least six feet apart from others when in public
- avoid contact with people who are sick
- stay home when you are sick
- disinfect commonly touched surfaces often

Per the Governor's executive order, people are now required, not encouraged to wear face coverings in enclosed public spaces, like grocery stores if they can medically tolerate it. People are reminded to reserve N95 masks for front-line workers; to send only one member of their family to the grocery store; to wear face coverings properly, by covering the nose and the mouth; and to observe the 6-foot social distancing rule, even when wearing a face covering. The Governor's latest executive order can be viewed in its entirety at www.mmdhd.org/novel-coronavirus.

For updated information, visit MMDHDs website at www.mmdhd.org.

Mid-Michigan District Health Department serves the residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties.

We take action to protect, maintain and improve the health of our community.

Advancing innovative solutions to achieve healthier outcomes

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