

Gratiot County Herald

Thursday, October 21, 2021

Health Department Reminds Residents To Get Flu Shot

The Mid-Michigan District [Health](#) Department (MMDHD) reminds the public that the flu season is upon us and that the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones from the flu is to get vaccinated.

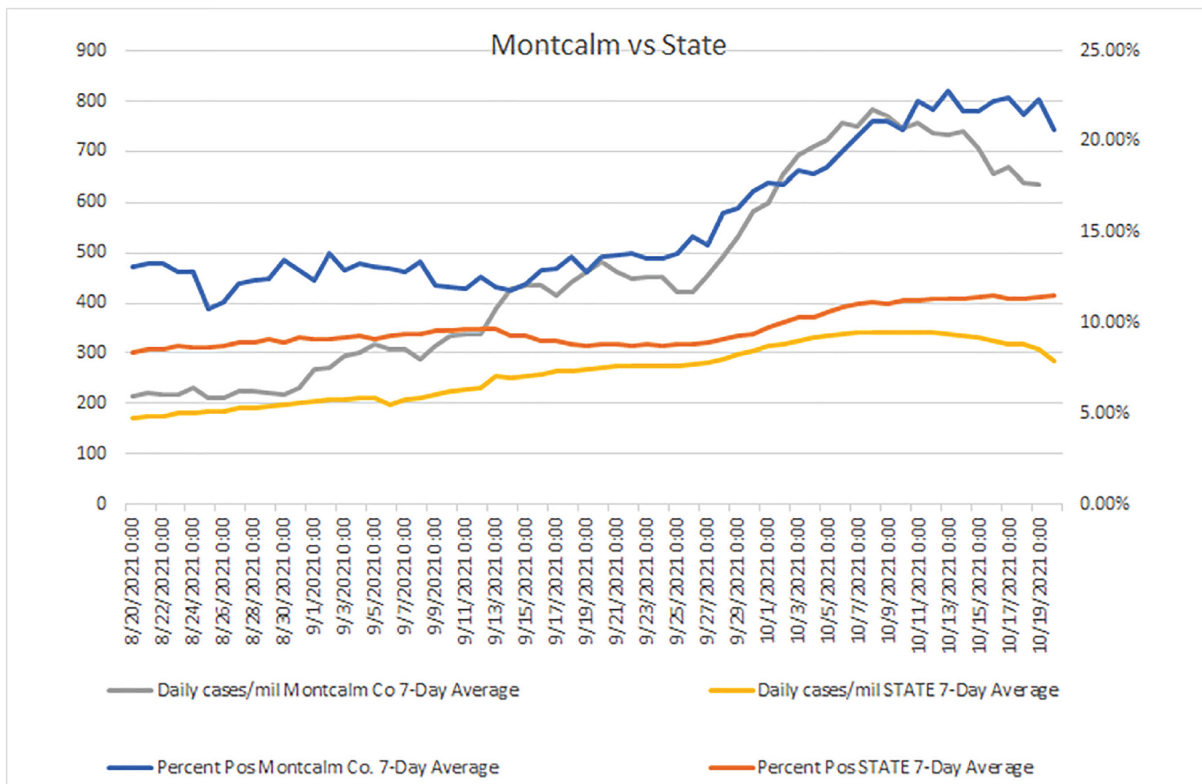
“COVID-19 and influenza are likely to collide in the coming months, making it more important than ever to do what we can to stay healthy and protect ourselves from preventable illnesses” said Sarah Doak, MMDHDs Director of Community Health & Education. “That is why MMDHD is recommending everyone over six months of age get vaccinated against the flu.”

The vaccine is available at a variety of places, including your doctor’s office, many pharmacies, or at your local health department.

Vaccination is especially important for those at high-risk for developing serious flu complications. Those most at-risk include young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes, or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.

Daily News

Monday, October 25, 2021



Mid-Michigan District Health Department Medical Director Dr. Jennifer Morse says while the number of COVID cases and positivity rate in Montcalm County appears to be decreasing after a spike this autumn, Montcalm County numbers (blue line and gray line) are still very much above the state of Michigan's overall average (orange line and yellow line). — Submitted chart

After surge, local COVID cases may be plateauing

ELISABETH WALDON
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Local COVID cases, which began steadily spiking in mid-September, are beginning to see a downward trend again, although both Montcalm and Ionia continue to be listed as “high risk” counties by the state of Michigan.

Local health officials hope the surge is now plateauing. In the meantime, they continue to encourage residents to get the COVID vaccination. According to the CDC, all COVID vaccines currently approved or authorized by the FDA are highly effective in preventing serious outcomes of COVID, including severe disease, hospitalization and death.

For Montcalm County residents, information about first and second doses, additional doses for the immunocompromised and booster doses can be found at mmdhd.org online.

For Ionia County residents, vaccine information can be found at ioniacounty.org.

org/health/health-department online.

MONTCALM COUNTY

According to the MI Safe Start Map (mistartmap.info), here's a look at how Montcalm County's reported COVID cases have increased (and now appear to be slightly decreasing) from late summer to present date:

- July 30-Aug. 5: 22 weekly cases
- Aug. 6-12: 40 weekly cases
- Aug. 13-19: 86 weekly cases
- Aug. 20-26: 117 weekly cases
- Aug. 27-Sept. 2: 124 weekly cases
- Sept. 3-9: 123 weekly cases
- Sept. 10-16: 209 weekly cases
- Sept. 17-23: 238 weekly cases
- Sept. 24-Sept. 30: 280 weekly cases
- Oct. 1-7: 378 weekly cases
- Oct. 8-14: 413 weekly cases
- Oct. 15-21: 365 weekly cases

Montcalm County is currently 48% vaccinated, according to Michigan data.

Montcalm County has reported a total of 51 COVID-related deaths this year:

11 in January, three in February, two in March, 12 in April, eight in May, three in June, one in July, four in August, three in September and four in October to date, according to Michigan data.

In 2020, Montcalm County reported a total of 71 COVID-related deaths (58 of them occurring in November and December 2020).

Mid-Michigan District Health Department Medical Director Dr. Jennifer Morse told the Daily News that while the number of cases and positivity rate in Montcalm County appears to be decreasing, Montcalm County numbers are still very much above the state's overall average (see accompanying chart).

“Montcalm County remains in the high transmission category per the CDC data map with increasing new COVID cases through September and early October,” MMDHD Health Officer Liz Braddock said. “The good news is that there was a

Continues on Page 3

After surge, local COVID cases may be plateauing

Continued from Page 1

decrease in new cases over the last two weeks leading up to October. In the week Oct. 7 through Oct. 13, Montcalm County had 402 new cases, compared to 366 from Oct. 14 through Oct. 20. However, 27 percent of recent cases have been school-aged children 5 to 18 years of age."

Braddock said the MMDHD reported two outbreaks to the state this week associated with religious services in Montcalm County.

A post on the First Baptist Church of Stanton's Facebook page on Friday stated: "Due to multiple COVID results and other types of sickness working its way through our congregation, we canceled this week's Sunday school and morning service for Oct. 24."

IONIA COUNTY

Here's a look at how Ionia County COVID cases have gradually increased (and now appear to be decreasing) from

late summer to present date:

- July 30-Aug. 5: 35 weekly cases
- Aug. 6-12: 77 weekly cases
- Aug. 13-19: 75 weekly cases
- Aug. 20-26: 98 weekly cases
- Aug. 27-Sept. 2: 118 weekly cases
- Sept. 3-9: 146 weekly cases
- Sept. 10-16: 210 weekly cases
- Sept. 17-23: 251 weekly cases
- Sept. 24-Sept. 30: 299 weekly cases
- Oct. 1-7: 358 weekly cases
- Oct. 8-14: 324 weekly cases
- Oct. 15-21: 253 weekly cases

Ionia County is currently 53% vaccinated, according to Michigan data.

Ionia County has reported a total of 47 COVID-related deaths this year: 20 in January, five in February, four in March, three in April, two in May, zero in June or July, two in August, seven in September and four in October to date, according to Michigan data.

In 2020, Ionia County reported a total of 47 COVID-related deaths (35 of them occurring in November and December

2020).

Ionia County Health Department Health Officer Ken Bowen told the Daily News that his department continues to track multiple outbreaks, including 23 in the local schools, as well as at "one or two" at area businesses, which he said are more difficult to identify.

"Case numbers and positivity rates have been increasing steadily for many weeks," Bowen said. "The last week to 10 days it appears that perhaps they are starting to plateau, but it is too soon to be certain."

LOCAL HOSPITAL CASES

As of Oct. 14, Spectrum Health United Hospital in Greenville had 17 COVID patients with two of those patients in the ICU and a bed capacity of 90%.

Sparrow Carson Hospital had two COVID patients with none in the ICU and a bed capacity of 53%, while Sparrow Ionia Hospital had one COVID patient with none in the ICU and a bed capacity of 72%.

Sheridan Community Hospital had two COVID patients with one in the ICU and a bed capacity of 70%.

LOCAL SCHOOL CASES

COVID clusters and outbreaks recently reported to the state include the following:

- Ionia County's Emerson Elementary School: 4 cases among staff and students, reported Oct. 18.

- Ionia County's Boyce Elementary School: 6 cases among students, reported Oct. 18.

- Ionia County's Westwood Elementary School: 3 cases among students, reported Oct. 18.

- Ionia County's Saranac Elementary School: 7 cases among staff and students, reported Oct. 18.

- Ionia County's Lakewood High School: 3 cases among students, reported Oct. 18.

- Montcalm County's Montabella High School: 10 cases among students, reported Oct. 11.

Gratiot County Herald

Thursday, October 28, 2021

Gratiot Community Garden Produces Second Successful Season

OCTOBER 27, 2021

By William Meiners
Herald Staff Writer

On Saturday, a cleanup of Gratiot County's Community Garden at the First Presbyterian [Church](#) in Alma marked the end of the second season for the project. The "town and gown" initiative seeks to better connect Alma College with the surrounding community.

The project has its roots in 2020 when students enrolled in the [health](#) care administration program were losing opportunities for internships because of COVID-19. A proposed community garden, which would have drawn partners from local businesses, was likewise in danger because of the pandemic.

Dale Sanders, director of the health care administrative program and associate professor, thought there might be a solution for lost internships, as well as a postponed community garden. Working with several Alma College colleagues and others, including Rex Hoyt, from the MidMichigan District Health Department, and Linda Bader, who helped build the St. Louis Farmers Market, Sanders got the program up and running.

It was not without challenges, which included finding houses for students who had left campus during the pandemic. Still, four students — James Budrick-Diaz, Mackenzie Hemmer, Shane Henry, and Kelsey Johnson — applied green thumbs and some elbow grease to a new endeavor.

Sanders, in more of an advisory role, encouraged those four interns to take ownership of the project. "Students were out there seven days a week," he said. "They came up with their rotation schedule, and someone was at the garden every single day."

They were some other growing pains in 2020. The first garden was located in Alma at the corner of Downie Street and Pine Avenue, a spot that had previously been a vacant lot. Since the goal was not just to grow vegetables, Sanders encouraged his students to foster that community outreach, including contacting places such as barbershops, a community unto themselves.

By harvest time in 2020, Sanders said the interns "not only did the work in the garden to get experience they needed, but they also worked with the Farmers Market in St. Louis, did Prescription for Health with Rex [Hoyt], and made connections with the Health Department."

For the 2021 program, five new interns picked up the torch from the previous year's foursome. Anne Armstrong, Christopher Dougherty, Noah Hamilton, Brian Iveson, and Nicholas Schram were required to put in 520 hours over 13 weeks. But they did so much more than that, beginning the project some two months before the spring planting. "It becomes their own baby," Sanders said.

With the garden moved to the First Presbyterian Church, students concentrated on growing the program, as well. Working with advisors throughout the college, they picked up grant writing skills. They worked on mission and vision statements. They brought in a girl scout troop and organized other community events.

"The students wanted the garden to be more than fresh vegetables," Sanders said. "They wanted it to be a place

Gratiot County Herald

Thursday, October 28, 2021

where community members can engage, where they can have fellowship. Where old and young can learn about healthy eating.”

In short, it’s about creating a community that’s not closed off at the end of campus. “We’re looking at ways of linking college throughout the community,” Sander said.

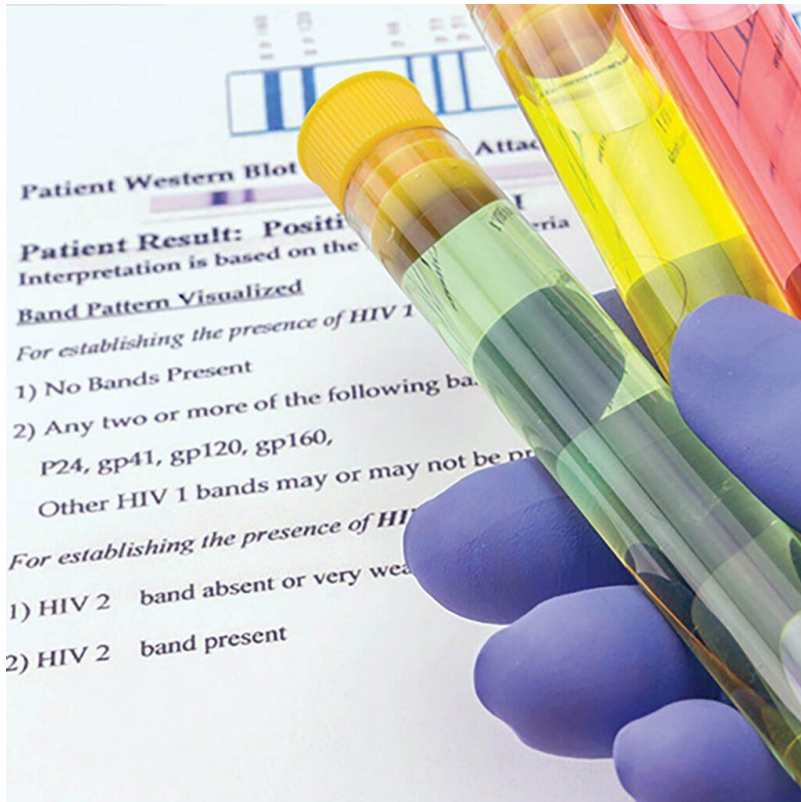
That second set of interns completed their work in early September. Last weekend, students from the Health Administration Professional Development Organization participated in the harvest clean up, along with other community members. With winter ahead of us, a third group of interns will soon begin discussing their plans for a community garden.

Daily News

Saturday, October 30, 2021

Montcalm County at risk of HIV outbreak due to injection drug use

By [Elisabeth Waldon](#) | on October 30, 2021



The Mid-Michigan District Health Department in Stanton offers anonymous and confidential HIV and STD testing. Montcalm County residents can call (989) 831-3615 for HIV test details and (989) 831-5237 for STD test details or visit mmdhd.org/hiv for more information. — Submitted photo | Mid-Michigan District Health Department

Montcalm County has been identified by the state of Michigan as being at risk for a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) outbreak associated with injection drug use, leading the state to recommend establishing a local syringe service program.

HIV is a virus that attacks the body's immune system and, if not treated, can lead to AIDS. People can get or transmit HIV through specific activities such as through sex or injection drug use.

A network of new HIV diagnoses with connections to Montcalm County has been identified by Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) epidemiologists and local health staff, according to Chelsea Wuth, associate public information officer for the MDHHS.

The Daily News learned of the news this week and contacted the MDHHS to ask if a press release was being sent out to notify the public. Wuth said the MDHHS didn't plan to issue a press release but agreed to answer questions on the topic.

Wuth told the Daily News that newly diagnosed individuals connected to Montcalm County showed injection drug use as a risk factor.

"The new diagnoses may or may not indicate wider transmission," Wuth said. "However, these new diagnoses were identified promptly by local partners and reported to MDHHS."

According to Wuth, HIV testing in Michigan has slowed over the past year "due to other pressing public health concerns facing communities."

Wuth said the MDHHS is working to increase and improve testing efforts for HIV, Hepatitis C (HCV) and sexually transmitted infections (STI) throughout Michigan "to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the community members and that they have access to comprehensive health services," including establishing a local syringe service program — a community-based prevention program which provides a range of services such as testing and connecting people to care and treatment for infectious diseases such as HIV, HCV and STI, access to and disposal of sterile syringes and injection equipment, and connecting people to local substance use disorder treatments.

Wuth said the MDHHS is also recommending increased rapid HIV/HCV testing services at local providers and increased outreach and services to people who inject drugs.

"The reduction in testing statewide has been seen in Montcalm County, which places an increased emphasis on taking a proactive approach and working directly with community partners to respond and ensure that needed services are available," Wuth said. "It is essential that these response efforts emphasize the importance of community engagement and align with the need in local communities and that services, including SSP (syringe service programs), are developed and provided in a way that is representative of the values and needs of the community."

Wuth referenced the term "tipping point" when explaining Montcalm County's current situation. She said the term is used to symbolize the emergence and/or growth of HIV in a community of people who inject drugs where HIV was not present previously.

"Montcalm County has been identified as an area where a potential increase of HIV/HCV diagnoses could occur due to injection drug use," Wuth said. "The new diagnoses with connections to Montcalm County among people who inject drugs may represent a 'tipping point' event, as Montcalm is an area that has not had a significant burden of HIV historically. For that reason, MDHHS is working proactively with local community partners to support interventions that ensure community members have access to services and that they are provided collaboratively and in an acceptable way to the community."

Wuth said the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) in Stanton has been made aware of the situation and the state is in contact with the local health department regarding planning and response efforts related to the HIV cases.

"Investigations and follow-up are in the initial stages and messaging regarding these cases to local partners was one of the first steps with plans for further engagement and collaboration moving forward," Wuth said.

MMDHD Health Officer Liz Braddock told the Daily News the state health department informed the local health department on Wednesday about the increase in HIV cases in Montcalm County.

“This is very concerning for a rural county,” Braddock said. “It underscores that the risks are real and that there is a need for testing, prevention and harm reduction in our community. Every adult should get tested for HIV once in their lifetime, and more often if they have higher risks.”

Braddock noted that Montcalm County does not currently have a syringe service program.

“According to the CDC, syringe service programs reduce HIV and Hepatitis infections and are an effective component of comprehensive community-based prevention and intervention programs,” Braddock said. “Such programs provide vaccination, testing, linkage to infectious disease care and substance use treatment, and access to and disposal of syringes and injection equipment.

“For people who inject drugs, the best way to reduce the risk of acquiring and transmitting disease through injection drug use is to stop injecting drugs,” Braddock noted. “For people who do not stop injecting drugs, using sterile injection equipment for each injection can reduce the risk of acquiring and transmitting infections and prevent outbreaks.”

The MMDHD in Stanton offers anonymous and confidential HIV and STD testing. Montcalm County residents can call (989) 831-3615 for HIV test details and (989) 831-5237 for STD test details.

Visit mmdhd.org/hiv for more information about local services. Visit mi.gov/ssp or cdc.gov/ssp for more information about state and federal resources

Daily News

Tuesday, November 2, 2021

Local health department distances itself from public school COVID rules

By [Elisabeth Waldon](#) | on November 02, 2021



Mid-Michigan District Health Department Board of Health member and Montcalm County Commissioner Adam Petersen, at right, speaks in defense of Medical Director Dr. Jennifer Morse, seated at center, regarding her COVID-related recommendations during last Wednesday's Board of Health meeting. — DN Photo | Elisabeth Waldon

STANTON — Multiple parents are asking the local health department why they are requiring certain COVID-related rules for public schools.

However, the local health department is declining to take responsibility, saying they are just passing on CDC recommendations and the decisions are completely up to the schools.



Mid-Michigan District Health Department Board of Health members Clinton County Commissioner Bruce DeLong, left, and Gratiot County Commissioner Chuck Murphy listen to public comment via Zoom voicing concern about whether it's the health department or public schools enacting COVID-related requirements during last Wednesday's Board of Health meeting. "We're not making these calls — it is the school," DeLong declared. "Our doctor is passing on recommendations from the CDC. The schools are picking and choosing what they want to do, but they seem to want to say it's the health department making these calls — and it is not." — DN Photo | Elisabeth Waldon

A couple named Jared and Kia from Clinton County's DeWitt Township participated in last Wednesday's Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) Board of Health meeting via Zoom. The couple, who are parents to a kindergarten student, voiced concern about an Oct. 15 letter sent out by DeWitt Public Schools stating the MMDHD had advised the school to have students pull their face masks up and down repeatedly while eating snacks — "for example, pull mask down, take a bite, pull mask up, repeat."

“No. 1, I can’t believe that the health department would ever suggest that children are eating with a mask on,” Kia said. “I can’t find any scientific research that supports this recommendation. No. 2, we have 5-year-olds who are eating with masks on? I’m a speech pathologist and I very much know that you should never cover somebody’s face when you are chewing anything. This is really concerning. As a health department, I would be very, very concerned about these recommendations. If a child is choking and their lips are turning blue and this little 5-year-old has a massive mask on his face, he’s not going to be able to show his teacher that he can’t breathe.”

The MMDHD has not issued an emergency order this year that requires face masks be worn in public school buildings.

“There needs to be some type of town hall meeting or something where we can ask questions, because these are our children and people are making recommendations and guidelines to the school district and they are enforcing them on our kids and we have no say,” said Kia, emotion and tears filling her voice. “Our child has sensory issues and the fact that I can’t talk to somebody and somebody can’t talk to me about what’s going on at school is insane.”

MMDHD Board of Health Chairman Bruce DeLong, who is a Clinton County commissioner, responded to Kia’s concerns.

“That issue was looked into,” DeLong said. “That was not a recommendation from the health department. That was an issue that was made by the school district and not anyone here at the health department.”

“I literally have a letter here,” Kia pointed out. “This superintendent (Shana Spickard) has told us that this was advised by the health department.”

“That was addressed,” DeLong repeated. “Hopefully in the future you will get correct information, not incorrect information (from the school).”

“I’ve never in my life felt so uncomfortable sending my child to school,” Kia said. “My stomach hurts when I drop my child off there. I don’t know what’s going on.”

“We keep hearing that DeWitt Public Schools, (Superintendent) Shanna Spickard and the Board of Education is working in conjunction with local municipalities and local health departments to ensure the safety of our kids,” Jared added. “Who at the health department is working with Shana Spickard in regards to these mandates? They keep saying they are working with somebody at the health department and they are getting recommendations? Who is giving recommendations to Shanna Spickard regarding masks?”

“Our doctor (Medical Director Jennifer Morse) is giving CDC information and passing it on to the schools,” DeLong responded. “The schools are deciding what to do.”



Medical Director Dr. Jennifer Morse

“She (Spickard) said that she’s been working with a nurse at the health department to get information in regards to enforcing these mandates and saying that these mandates are needed,” Jared said. “I need that person’s information and I need to know what type of authority she has. The way I see it, Shana Spickard and this nurse are single-handedly enforcing these mandates on our kids against everybody’s will and we need to figure out who has the authority, who is giving them the authority to do this?”

“The school has the authority to follow health department recommendations,” Morse responded. “I am giving the recommendations. Our nurse may be passing on the recommendations.”

As Jared continued to ask for the nurse’s identity, DeLong responded, “I can’t provide that to you, sir.”

MMDHD Health Officer Liz Braddock — who communicates regularly with local school superintendents regarding COVID recommendations and other issues — provided her contact information to Jared and Kia so they could contact her to ask more questions. Morse also noted that an archive of her weekly COVID update recordings and PDF slideshows presented to public schools in local counties can be viewed at mmdhd.org/covid-schools online.

DeWitt Public Schools is currently being sued by a father of two students over its face mask policies.

According to the Lansing City Pulse, Adam Holland of DeWitt, who is also a trial attorney, filed a lawsuit against the school district this past Friday in 29th Circuit Court, asking a judge to immediately overturn the district’s masking requirements and arguing that Spickard as superintendent lacks the legal authority to issue the mandate.

FACE MASKS IN A PUMPKIN PATCH?

Meanwhile, Melissa, who has a student at St. Johns Public Schools, told the Board of Health via Zoom that her child and other students are being required to wear a face mask during a field trip to Uncle John’s Cider Mill in St. Johns, which was scheduled for this past Thursday.



Mid-Michigan District Health Department Health Officer Liz Braddock provided her contact information to several concerned parents who had questions about how public schools are implementing COVID-related requirements during last Wednesday's Board of Health meeting. — DN Photo | Elisabeth Waldon

"I understand they have to wear a mask on the bus, but the school is telling us the students have to wear a mask outdoors and that information is coming directly from the health department," Melissa said. "I was told I need to contact the health department regarding that matter. The schools are directing us toward the health department as to where they are getting that information. Why, if they don't have to wear them on a playground, do they have to wear them to an outdoor field trip to a pumpkin patch?"

"We're not making these calls — it is the schools," DeLong said. "Our doctor is passing on recommendations from the CDC. The schools are picking and choosing what they want to do, but they seem to want to say it's the health department making these calls — and it is not."

"So when is the health department going to backfire at the schools and tell then you've gotta quit putting words in our mouth?" Melissa asked. "The school is pointing us at you. It's getting very frustrating."

"I am going to try to talk to the superintendents to hopefully accept their own blame for what they are doing, and not blame the health department," DeLong said.

'WE'RE BEHIND WHAT SHE SAYS'

Also Wednesday, Board of Health member and Montcalm County Commissioner Adam Petersen spoke up in support of Morse before the public comment portion of the meeting had gotten underway. Petersen noted that Morse has reported being "badgered" by some community members.

"I think we need to reinforce that we stand by her," Petersen said. "I think she does a great job and it needs to be known that we support what she says. I just want to get that out there. We need to create a stance that we're behind what she says no matter what it is, even if it's wrong — and I doubt it's wrong."

Parent sues over mask mandate

Authority of school
district challenged

Kara Berg

Lansing State Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

ST JOHNS – A DeWitt parent is suing the school district, superintendent and Board of Education over rules about masking students.

Adam Holland, the parent of two children at DeWitt High School and Herbison Woods Elementary School, filed the lawsuit Oct. 29 in Clinton County Circuit Court.

Holland wrote in the lawsuit that his son's teacher sent an email about his son consistently pulling his mask down below his nose. The teacher raised concerns about his "unsafe and disrespectful behavior." A fellow student and his teacher both asked him to raise his mask and he refused. Holland called this "mask shaming" in the complaint.

**"Our goal continues to
focus on keeping students
in school."**

Shanna Spickard

Superintendent

Much of the lawsuit focuses on whether the district is allowed to unilaterally require masks without a vote from the school board or input from parents and the community. Holland wrote that Superintendent Shanna Spickard did not have the authority to make that decision.

Spickard declined to comment on the lawsuit, but said the district planned to continue with its masking guidelines communicated to families in August.

"Our goal continues to focus on keeping students in school, and our current mask plan has drastically reduced the number of quarantines, keeping students safely in the classrooms, athletes on the field/court, and many events/performances in person," Spickard wrote in an email.

DeWitt schools have set masking regulations based on the risk of transmission in the area. Masks are always recommended for all students and staff, but are not required unless the area is at a substantial risk for

Lawsuit

Continued from Page 1A

COVID-19 transmission. Masks are always required on buses.

Holland requested the court rule that the mandatory mask policy is void and unenforceable, as well as rule that district officials and employees cannot enforce the policy, or any

policy, unless it is approved by the school board.

Board of Education Vice President Jason Hanselman declined to comment and provided the same statement as Spickard.

The DeWitt Board of Education said in an Oct. 12 statement they plan to keep the current mask guidelines so there are fewer quarantines and students do not have to miss school.

"We have reviewed the recommen-

dations regarding mask wearing in school from the Centers for Disease Control, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and Mid-Michigan District Health Department," the board wrote in the statement. "If the State Fire Marshall told us an issue in one of our buildings created a fire hazard, we would not think twice and would do whatever is necessary to resolve the issue. We approach COVID the same way. If our health experts tell us

wearing masks will keep students safe and maximize in-person learning, we are going to follow their recommendation."

The board members wrote in the statement they felt they would not be fulfilling their duties by ignoring recommendations from health organizations, all of which have consistently recommended masks in schools.

Holland is an attorney and filed the lawsuit himself.

Daily News

Thursday, November 4, 2021

Drug take-back event set for Saturday in Sheridan

By [The Daily News Staff](#) | on November 04, 2021

SHERIDAN — The Montcalm Prevention Collaborative will host a Drug Take-back event from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday at Sheridan Community Hospital.

The Montcalm Prevention Collaborative has been holding drug take-back events for approximately 12 years. Last Saturday, the collaborative held one in Greenville and the total weight of medications collected throughout the 12 years is 9,999 pounds. On Saturday, the collaborative will cross the 10,000-pound threshold.

The public is invited to attend this Saturday's event. Representatives from the offices of Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, Sen. Debbie Stabenow, Sen. Gary Peters, State Sen. Rick Outman and State Rep. Pat Outman have also been invited. A brief ceremony is planned for 10 a.m.

This has truly been a collaborative effort over the years with partners including the Montcalm County Sheriff's Office, local law enforcement agencies, the Michigan State Police, the three local hospital systems — Spectrum (Greenville and Lakeview), Sparrow (Carson City) and the place this all began and the site of the next take-back day, Sheridan Community Hospital. In addition, participants have included agencies such as the Montcalm Care Network and the Mid-Michigan District Health Department. At the heart of it all, and key to the success, are the volunteers who stepped up to make this possible.

Lakeview Area News

Thursday, November 4, 2021

Health Department Scheduling COVID-19 Booster Shots

**By Leslie Kinnee, Public
Information Officer
Mid-Michigan District
Health Department**

Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) is administering Moderna, Pfizer, and J&J COVID-19 vaccine boosters by appointment to those who are eligible.

Those who received two doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines are eligible for a booster dose if it has been at least six months after their second dose, and they fall into one of these categories:

- ☐ They are 65 and older
- ☐ They are 18 and older living in long-term care settings
- ☐ They are 18 and older with underlying medical conditions, like obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer, heart conditions, and more.
- ☐ They are 18 and older who work or live in high-risk settings, like first re-

sponders, education staff, childcare workers, food and agriculture workers, manufacturing workers, corrections workers, U.S. Postal Service workers, public transit workers, and grocery store workers.

Those who received the one dose J&J vaccine are eligible for a booster dose if they are at least 18 years of age and it has been at least two months since their initial shot.

Eligible individuals may choose which vaccine they receive as a booster dose. Some may prefer to get the same type of vaccine they originally received, while others may prefer to get a different booster. The CDC's recommendations now allow for this type of mix and match dosing for booster shots. Keep in mind that if you received first and second doses of Moderna or Pfizer and would like a J&J booster, you will need to wait at least 6 months after your second dose. If you received a first dose of J&J and would like a Pfizer or Moderna booster, you need to wait at least 2 months after your initial

dose.

MMDHD continues to administer first and second doses of Moderna (18 years of age and older), J&J (18 years of age and older) and Pfizer (12 years of age and older). MMDHD is also administering an additional third dose of Moderna or Pfizer to those who are moderately or severely immunocompromised. This additional dose can be given 28 days after the second dose in the primary series.

If you would like to make an appointment to get a COVID-19 vaccination at Mid-Michigan District Health Department, call one of our branch offices and select "option 5".

The COVID-19 vaccine is also available at many other locations, including many pharmacies and physician offices. For a complete list of COVID-19 vaccine locations near you, visit www.vaccines.gov.

For more information, please visit www.mmdhd.org.



Cars line up at the Sparrow Laboratories Drive-Thru Services site on Jan. 28 at the Frandor Shopping Center in Lansing. The site offered COVID-19 vaccinations. NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

Where to schedule a COVID shot for children ages 5 to 11

Jared Weber

Lansing State Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

A variety of vaccination sites across Greater Lansing are starting appointments for children in the newly eligible 5-11 age bracket.

The Food and Drug Administration authorized emergency use for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine to include children ages 5-11 Oct. 29. Like previous authorizations for older children and adults, the vaccine will be a two-dose series, administered three weeks apart.

Doses are one-third of those administered to previously authorized age groups. Kids will receive 10 micrograms, while people ages 12 or older get 30 micrograms of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

According to an FDA press release, the vaccine's safety was studied in about 3,100 children ages 5-11. No serious side effects have been reported.

See VACCINE, Page 4A

More inside

OSHA sets Jan. 4 shot deadline for workers, **5A**

Vaccine

Continued from Page 1A

Sparrow will begin offering COVID-19 vaccines for children ages 5-11 starting Saturday at its Frandor drive-thru vaccination site, according to a spokesperson.

Vaccine appointments can be scheduled on the MySparrow app, Sparrow spokesperson John Foren said. Appointments are mandatory; drop-in visits are not permitted.

The Sparrow Laboratories Drive-Thru Site at Frandor is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 7 a.m.-3 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. It will also be open Saturdays from 8 a.m.-noon for the coming three weekends.

Vaccine appointments starting Saturday can now be scheduled at Walgreens and Rite Aid pharmacies. Appointments starting Sunday can be

Doses are one-third of those administered to older age groups. According to an FDA press release, the vaccine's safety was studied in about 3,100 children ages 5-11. No serious side effects were reported.

scheduled at CVS Pharmacy locations.

Additionally, local public health departments are ramping up appointments for kids in the eligible age range.

Ingham County Health Department started vaccinations for the 5-11 age group Thursday.

Appointments are available from 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and from 1 p.m.-4 p.m. on Thursday, as well as at the department's regular COVID-19 vaccination clinics on Tuesdays and Fridays. Appointments can be scheduled by going to Ingham County Health Department's web page. A parent or guardian must be present.

Vaccination appointments at one of the county's community health centers

also can be made by calling (517) 887-4517 (choose option #3).

The county will also be providing vaccines for clinics hosted by the Fledge Foundation, a Lansing-based nonprofit, on Nov. 13 and Dec. 4. Both clinics, happening at 1300 Eureka St. from noon-5 p.m., will feature food, live music and prizes.

Scheduling is also open online for the Barry-Eaton District Health Department for appointments starting Monday. The department will host vaccination clinics Monday at the Barry Expo Center and Tuesday at the Lansing Mall. Appointments can also be made for the health department's Charlotte and Hastings offices.

And in Clinton County, vaccinations start Monday at the Mid-Michigan District Health Department's Clinton County office, located at 1307 E. Townsend Road in St Johns. Dates for appointments will vary. Appointments can be made by calling 989-224-2195, and pressing option 5 then 2.