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Health Department's nurses ask public for help

Ithaca, Stanton, St. Johns- As COVID-19 continues to spread in Clinton, Gratiot, and Montcalm counties, Mid-Michigan District Health Department's (MMDHD) Communicable Disease Nurses find themselves stretched pretty thin. This has been the case throughout the pandemic, but a recent surge in cases reported to MMDHD has compounded the problem.

"Our nurses work tirelessly, seven days a week, answering the public's COVID-related questions and providing those who are COVID-19 positive with important guidance. Our nurses make every effort to return phone calls in a timely manner, but that is becoming more and more difficult," says Sarah Doak, MMDHD's Community Health and Education Division Director. "It getting to the point where our nurses may not be able to return every call, so we are asking the public for help."

MMDHD wants to make sure people get answers to their COVID-19 questions but would like the public to know that they can usually find the answers they are looking for by visiting its website at www.mmdhd.org/covid-center/. Here you'll find up-to-date information on quarantine, isolation, what to do if you test positive or are exposed to someone who is positive, guidance on at-home antigen tests, who is eligible to get a COVID-19 booster, how to schedule a COVID-19 vaccination appointment, and much more.

If you have tested positive or have been identified as a close contact, you can even find a handy COVID Calculator on our website at www.mmdhd.org/covid-center/. This calculator can help you figure out when and how long you need to quarantine or isolate. It can also calculate when you could be at risk of re-infection and when a person is considered fully vaccinated.

"Checking our website for guidance before calling the health department will help free up our nurses to answer the most complex COVID-19 questions," Added Doak.

MMDHD would also like to remind the public that if they test positive for COVID-19, they should:

- Isolate at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms. If you have no symptoms, isolate for 10 days from the date of your positive test. After 10 days you may end your isolation if it has been at least 24 hours with no fever without using a fever-reducing medication and if your COVID-19 symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, etc.) have improved.

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- Notify your close contacts and let them know that they need to quarantine for 10 days. Those who are COVID-19 positive can spread the virus beginning 48 hours (two days) before symptoms start or 48 hours (two days) before testing positive.
- Visit our website at www.mmdhd.org/covid-center/ and fill out the "Positive Self-Reporting Form" which can be found under the "Important Alerts" heading.

Mid-Michigan District Health Department offers several COVID-19 vaccination clinics each week by appointment only to those who are eligible. To find out if you are eligible, visit our website at www.mmdhd.org/covid-center/. Those who have not been vaccinated or those who qualify for a booster are encouraged to call the branch office nearest them to schedule an appointment:

Clinton County: 989-224-2195, option #5 and then option #2

Gratiot County: 989-875-3681, option #5 and then option #2

Montcalm County: 989-831-5237, option #5 and then option #2

MMDHD is also asking community members to remain vigilant and practice these strategies to help slow the spread of COVID-19:

- Wash your hands frequently
- Stay at least six feet away from others not in your household
- Wear a mask around others not in your household
- Avoid crowded areas or large gatherings
- Ventilate indoor spaces if around others not in your household
- Seek testing if ill, exposed, or after traveling
- Follow isolation or quarantine guidance if ill, exposed, or waiting for test results

Community members are encouraged to visit our website (www.mmdhd.org) for the most up-to-date COVID-19 related information.

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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