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**February 22, 2021**

## **Health Department of Northwest Michigan COVID-19 Update**

### **Vaccination efforts continue in region**

As the total number of deaths due to COVID-19 exceeds 500,000 across the U.S., the impact of approximately 95 deaths across the Health Department of Northwest Michigan are felt in households grieving the loss of loved ones.

“Every loss is devastating and is someone’s mother or father or grandparent, neighbor or co-worker,” said Dr. Josh Meyerson, medical director for the health department. “We mourn with them for the loss of their loved one.”

Dr. Meyerson notes that taking mitigation measures - wearing a mask covering your nose and mouth, staying six feet away from others, and washing your hands frequently - and getting vaccinated are the most effective ways to protect yourself and your loved ones from contacting or spreading the virus.

Vaccination efforts are stepping up in the health department’s service area with more than 3,800 doses administered last week and more than 2,500 planned for this week at clinics in Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet and Otsego counties.

“Both Moderna and Pfizer are safe and effective,” Dr. Meyerson said. “Since December 14 over 40 million doses have been administered in the U.S. These vaccines have undergone the most intensive safety monitoring in history and results from the many different monitoring systems are very reassuring,” he said. Many people report mild side effects like pain and swelling at the injection site, headache, fever, fatigue, or muscle aches. These are common and in general last for less than 24 hours. Some individuals, more commonly with the second dose and in younger persons, may have more moderate symptoms and need to take a day off work but still these side effects are short lived and provide months of protection.

“Even more impressive is how well they work to reduce severe illness and mortality,” he said. “The vaccines were all 100% effective in the vaccine trials in stopping hospitalizations and death. I recommend that everyone that can, get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as vaccine is available to them. The combination of the protection from immunization and the mitigation measures we are taking are the best protection against getting or transmitting this disease. I also know that every person's situation is different, and some may have questions regarding safety and efficacy for them or their families,” Dr. Meyerson said, urging people to contact their care provider to discuss any concerns they may have.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan reported 7 new cases on Saturday, February 20: Antrim (4), Charlevoix (0), Emmet (1), and Otsego (2) counties. On Sunday, February 21, 8 new cases were reported: Antrim (1), Charlevoix (1), Emmet (4), and Otsego (2) counties. Today, Monday, February 22,

*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](http://nwhealth.org).*

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17 new cases were reported: Antrim (4), Charlevoix (3), Emmet (5), and Otsego (5) counties. As of 4 p.m. today, the health department is reporting:

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Antrim (917), Charlevoix (1,037), Emmet (1,500), and Otsego (1,160).
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Antrim (802), Charlevoix (920), Emmet (1,260) and Otsego (980).
- Confirmed COVID-19 associated deaths in the following counties: Antrim (19), Charlevoix (12), Emmet (37), and Otsego (25).

The State of Michigan is reporting 581,403 cases and 15,362 deaths. As of February 19, 2021, cumulative recovered cases statewide are 529,080.

Stay up to date on the latest information in the Health Department of Northwest Michigan jurisdiction by [liking and following our Facebook page](#) and visiting our [COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#). To locate a testing facility, visit the [Michigan COVID-19 Test Finder website](#). To track the risk levels of COVID-19 pandemic indicators, visit the [MI Safe Start Map website](#). For more information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, visit the MDHHS [vaccine website](#) or the [CDC vaccine website](#).