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Health Department of Northwest Michigan COVID-19 Update

COVID-19 cases keep going up in region

In March, an alarming 1,056 COVID-19 cases were identified within the four-county jurisdiction of the Health Department of Northwest Michigan. Since the first reported case in March 2020, more than 5,800 total cases have been reported in Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet and Otsego counties.

"Positivity and cases continue to increase across the state and the Traverse City region," said Lisa Peacock, Health Officer. "Simultaneously, our local hospitals are reporting a sharp increase in inpatient cases of COVID-19. We have had several cases of the B.1.1.7 variant identified across northern Michigan and therefore we suspect that it will continue to become more predominant as predicted," she said.

Outbreaks continue to be related to close contact among individuals who have not yet been vaccinated. Activities such as youth and school sports, which provide opportunity for the virus to spread in close contact as well as any congregate living scenarios, are particularly vulnerable to the increased transmissibility of circulating variants, Peacock noted.

At the same time, the health department reached a milestone by administering the 30,000th dose of the COVID-19 vaccine this past week. "This is the result of a significant effort put forth by our entire communities," Peacock said. "In each county where we hold mass vaccination clinics every week, our staff is supported and assisted by an army of volunteers and community partners. We simply couldn't do it without them. This effort requires significant disruption in not only normal health department operations but also has a significant impact on the daily life of our volunteers and community partners. Reporting this number of doses administered over a period of just three months brings significant pride in the communities that keep making it happen every day."

With allocations of vaccine doses increasing in all three available forms of the vaccine, the health department continues to be able to reach higher risk residents. In addition to community clinics which continue to grow in size, scope, and location, the health department is partnering with EMS and aging partners to vaccinate the homebound as well as provide vaccinations on-site at jails and other congregate settings. In addition, the health department is redistributing vaccine to eligible pharmacies and providers in the community.

Today, April 1, 84 new cases were reported: Antrim (12), Charlevoix (19), Emmet (16), and Otsego (37) counties. Today we are also reporting 1 new COVID-19 associated death in Emmet county. As of 4 p.m. today, the health department is reporting:

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Antrim (1,216), Charlevoix (1,207), Emmet (1,743), and Otsego (1,673).
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Antrim (945), Charlevoix (1,014), Emmet (1,444), and Otsego (1,090).

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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- Confirmed COVID-19 associated deaths in the following counties: Antrim (20), Charlevoix (13), Emmet (39), and Otsego (28).

The State of Michigan is reporting 678,295 cases and 16,141 deaths.

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.