



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TO: Media Partners
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REGARDING: First Death Attributed to COVID-19
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Western Upper Peninsula Health Department Reports First Death Attributed to COVID-19

Gogebic County -- The Western Upper Peninsula Health Department (WUPHD) received notification today of the first local death attributed to COVID-19. The individual was an elderly male Gogebic County resident with underlying health issues. The Health Department continues to investigate the case.

“Our heartfelt sympathies and prayers go out to the family who have lost their loved one,” said Cathryn A. Beer, Health Officer at WUPHD. “This is a tragic reminder of how serious a threat COVID-19 is to our residents, especially the elderly and those with underlying health conditions. We need to work together to protect each other, support each other, and slow the spread of this disease.”

As a precaution, Western Upper Peninsula Health Department is asking everyone to follow the Governor’s Executive Order 2020-21 to “Stay Home. Stay Safe.” Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should self-isolate for 14 days to avoid potentially exposing others. Remember, the symptoms of COVID-19 are not your usual runny nose and sneezing. Instead, COVID-19 symptoms include fever of >100.4, dry cough, and shortness of breath. Symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus. If you feel well, you do not need to be tested. If you do become ill, call your doctor before going in to the office. Testing will be determined based on risk assessment.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, people should:

- Stay home if they are sick
- Wash their hands frequently
- Avoid close contact with sick people



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- Disinfect commonly touched surfaces
- Avoid touching your face; avoid shaking hands
- Follow suggested guidelines for social distancing

WUPHD is working to coordinate their response with federal, state, and local officials, as well as healthcare professionals, institutions, schools and community organizations. For more information, please contact the Western Upper Peninsula Health Department at (906) 482-7382. Updates are also available at www.wuphd.org.

A local COVID-19 informational call line is available Monday through Friday, from 8 AM EST to 4 PM EST at (906) 487-5545. There is a State informational hotline available from 8 AM EST to 5 PM EST seven days per week. That number is 1-888-535-6136. Additional information on COVID-19 can be found on the MDHHS website (www.michigan.gov/coronavirus), or the CDC website (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>).

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