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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Public Health
Prevent · Promote · Protect

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HEALTH DEPARTMENT TRACKING & PREVENTING SPREAD OF COVID-19

As Logan County and Illinois experience more cases of infections from COVID-19, it is urged that the community continues to follow prevention measures which includes wearing a mask in public, maintaining social distancing and following all recommended safety precautions. As more people are becoming less compliant with these practices, more people are becoming infected which is a major threat to the entire community. Currently 60 individuals from Logan County have tested positive.

Until a preventative treatment measure or vaccine is available, the Logan County Department of Public Health (LCDPH) nursing staff is working hard to keep you, your family, and your community safe to prevent the spread of COVID-19 through a public health process called "Contact Tracing." Contact tracing is an effective method that has been employed for years by public health to control the spread of infectious diseases such as Ebola, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections.

COVID-19 presents many challenges for LCDPH/public health contact tracing efforts as the virus is dealt with on a large scale and can be spread from person to person without visible symptoms. The process of contact tracing for COVID-19 involves identifying and contacting individuals who have tested positive. Once infected individuals are contacted by LCDPH, the

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nurses will then interview and attempt to identify people who have been in close contact with them as they may have been exposed to the virus. People who are known to be infected will be asked to isolate by staying home in one room away from other individuals and pets. People who have been identified as contacts with known infected individuals will be asked to quarantine to prevent spreading the infection if they are in fact infected.

Contact tracing is a difficult and time consuming process that more specifically involves interviewing infected individuals and their contacts, notifying contacts of their potential exposure, referring contacts for testing, monitoring contacts (daily) for signs and symptoms, and connecting contacts to the services they need so they can remain at home during the self-quarantine process. It is vital during this voluntary quarantine that people potentially infected (contacts) stay at home and maintain a social distance of at least 6 feet from others until 14 days after their exposure to the person with COVID-19. During this period, people in quarantine will be asked to monitor themselves by checking their temperatures twice daily and watching for symptoms such as cough, fever or shortness of breath.

Regardless whether an infected individual is isolated or a contact is in quarantine, the process is not convenient, but it is vital to cooperate and follow all instructions provided by the LCDPH nursing staff to prevent further spread of infection within the community. People who are known to be infected will remain anonymous to the public and their contacts.

Don Cavi, Public Health Administrator at LCDPH stated, "The nursing staff at LCDPH are true heroes and deserve much credit as they work long hours with infected individuals and their contacts to prevent further spread of COVID-19." Cavi adds, "The community can be just as big a hero if everyone, including those in isolation and quarantine, follows through with their responsibilities to prevent further spread of the COVID-19 virus."

For more information, please contact the Logan County Department of Public Health at 217-735-2317. The department hours of operation are Monday-Friday, 7:30-4:30. For information regarding LCDPH services and for the latest COVID-19 county statistics, you can log onto their website at WWW.LCDPH.ORG.

Information Source: Illinois Department of Public Health