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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 14, 2020

### COVID-19 Joint Press Communication Update

As of today's release, the Joint Crisis Communication Team (CCT) reports the following numbers:

- Confirmed Cases in Macon County Residents: 43
- Deaths of Macon County Residents with COVID-19: 3
- Age Ranges of Confirmed Cases:
  - One case in 20s
  - Five cases in 30s
  - Two cases in 40s
  - Five cases in 50s
  - Six cases in 60s
  - Seven cases in 70s
  - Ten cases in 80s
  - Seven cases in 90s

Upon notification of these positive cases, the Macon County Health Department (MCHD) immediately started contact tracing following Illinois Department of Public Health protocol and guidance. Contacts have been and are being notified and provided with appropriate direction. All confirmed cases are following isolation guidelines. Those considered to be contacts of the confirmed cases have been and are being notified and instructed to follow direction to prevent the spread of illness.

Of these 43 confirmed cases of COVID-19, 32 are associated with a local long-term care facility, Fair Havens Senior Living long-term care facility. The MCHD does not regularly identify the names of long-term care facilities with outbreaks of communicable diseases. However, in partnership with Fair Havens Senior Living, the MCHD is identifying this facility to assist with communications to the community and family members of residents. When cases are confirmed at any long-term care facility, IDPH guidance directs the long-term facility of steps to be taken with residents and the facility. IDPH guidance also directs the long-term care facility to communicate this information with the physician, local health department, regulatory agency, families, staff and residents. The MCHD has continued to be in ongoing communication with long-term care facilities.

As a reminder, testing is not widely available to the general public, it is ***imperative*** that community members, whether feeling ill or well, implement social distancing best practices to

limit the spread and contraction of COVID-19. This means staying home and away from as many people as possible as often as possible.

If you experience symptoms such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath, do not present at a hospital emergency room or doctor's office unless it is a true emergency. Call your primary care physician first. Individuals without a primary care physician can call:

- DMH Medical Group at (217) 876-2856
- HSHS Medical Group Patient Advocate at 844-520-8897
- Crossing Healthcare at (217) 877-9117
- SIU at (217) 872-3800

For COVID-19 screening, the following resources are available:

- Memorial Health System's respiratory screening clinic located at DMH Express Care East (4455 U.S. Route 36 East); open seven days a week, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. Before coming to the respiratory clinic, individuals should call (217) 876-1200.
- HSHS St. Mary's Hospital 24/7 COVID-19 Hotline at (217) 464-2966
- HSHS Medical Group offers free virtual assessments for COVID-19 at [www.anytimecare.com](http://www.anytimecare.com)

Anyone entering healthcare facilities should be prepared to be screened before entering.

### **Daily PSA: How COVID-19 Spreads (A Message From the CDC)**

COVID-19 is a new disease and **we are still learning about how it spreads** and the severity of illness it causes. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.
- Maintaining good social distance (about 6 feet) is very important in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. This is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads, but we are still learning more about this virus. CDC recommends people practice frequent "hand hygiene," which is either washing hands with soap or water or using an alcohol-based hand rub. CDC also recommends routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.

How easily a virus spreads from person-to-person can vary. Some viruses are highly contagious, like measles, while other viruses do not spread as easily. Another factor is whether the spread is sustained, which means it goes from person-to-person without stopping.

- The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading very easily and sustainably between people.
- Information from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic suggests that this virus is spreading more efficiently than influenza.

As we continue to learn more about COVID-19 each day, we cannot stress enough the importance of abiding by the Stay-At-Home order, wearing cloth face coverings in public and congregate settings, washing hands thoroughly and often, disinfecting frequently-touched surfaces often throughout each day, and monitoring yourself for symptoms that could suggest COVID-19 infection and being proactive about contacting your healthcare provider in these instances.

CDC American Sign Language Video Series containing information about how COVID-19 spreads:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4gborCUztk&list=PLvrp9iOILTQatwnqm61jqFrsfUB4RKh6J&index=7&t=0s>

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