Benzie-Leelanau
DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT
CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION
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For Immediate Release
February 25, 2021

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department COVID-19 Update

Today there were five new cases of COVID-19 reported in Benzie County and four new cases of COVID-19 reported in Leelanau County.

Lisa Peacock, Health Officer for the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department and Health Department of Northwest Michigan, shared testimony today with the Michigan Senate Health Policy Committee on the vaccine rollout process from the perspective of a rural health department.

As one of two health officers selected to testify, Peacock discussed the status of the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination in northern Michigan communities. Local health departments and hospitals are working in partnership to ensure all available resources are used in the best possible way. Regular communication with community partners assures a growing understanding of each other's strengths and limitations and allows for shifting of resources when necessary, she noted. Partnerships with county governments, volunteers, the Michigan National Guard, EMS and Public Safety, Federally Qualified Health Centers, tribal partners, schools, and other community partners have contributed to the prompt administration of allocated doses to interested and eligible community members. In addition, innovative strategies are underway to reach the most vulnerable populations across the region.

In the coming weeks, the health department's goals for vaccination rollout include:
- Establishing a regular clinic schedule with set days, times, and locations within each county.
- Further developing core staff teams in each county to assure ongoing smooth coverage of all necessary roles including coordination with volunteers, community partners, and the Michigan National Guard
- Assessing areas of particular vulnerability throughout our jurisdiction and plan for addressing the needs of those residents to receive a vaccination.
- Continuing to improve communication with those who are waiting to receive their first vaccination.
- Supporting additional points of access, such as pharmacies and provider offices, across the communities of northern Michigan, as vaccine allocation increases
- Identifying ongoing funding and resources to promote long-term planning for a sustainable pandemic response.

"Each day brings new hope and new challenges. The high demand for appointments and great community enthusiasm represents a welcome challenge for public health where we embrace the role of 'Chief Health Strategist' in ensuring that community health needs are met through partnership and innovative strategies. The sheer number of people who have volunteered their time to help in this public health effort brings energy and encouragement to our communities," Peacock stated. "As we continue to shift and adapt to the changing needs of the residents we are serving, we will lean on that strength and keep moving forward so that our communities can be adequately protected."

As of today, here is where we are currently:
- Number of vaccine doses allocated for this week: 700 doses
- Number of vaccine doses administered so far this week: 684 doses
- Total number of vaccine doses received: 5,074 doses
- Total number of vaccine doses administered: 5,058 doses

As of 4:00pm, the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is reporting:
- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 887, Leelanau– 879
- Active COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 57, Leelanau– 61
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 800, Leelanau– 803
- Confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Benzie – 30, Leelanau– 15
- Hospitalized: 127 total; 1 current

The State of Michigan has reported 585,352 cases and 15, 453 deaths.

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