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PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

For Immediate Release
December 2, 2021

Unvaccinated causing strain on hospitals, health systems

As Michigan continues to record high numbers of COVID-19 cases, new data from the Michigan Health & Hospital Association (MHA) proves that the majority of Michigan residents severely sick with COVID-19 are unvaccinated. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and MHA are pleading with residents to get vaccinated for their own health, the safety of Michigan's health care personnel, and to avoid additional strain on health care systems that are already stretched and struggling to respond.

Locally, the Munson health systems, which serve the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department and other counties across the region, are experiencing similar problems with pressure put on limited bed availability, and an overburdened staff.

"Vaccination is our most powerful tool," said Dr. Josh Meyerson, Medical Director with the Health Department. MDHHS data from January 15-November 19 demonstrates that unvaccinated people account for 85.8% of COVID cases, 87% of hospitalizations, and 86.4% of deaths, Dr. Meyerson noted.

The data is clear: if you are unvaccinated, you are risking hospitalization or death, health officials said. "Getting vaccinated keeps you and your loved ones safe as we gather together this holiday," Dr. Meyerson said.

Based on recent data from most Michigan health systems, MHA has found that three out of four COVID patients are unvaccinated (76%), 87% of COVID ICU patients are unvaccinated and 88% of COVID ventilator patients are unvaccinated.

Michigan's number of hospitalized COVID-19 cases reached a new high this week, with 4,291 patients hospitalized. Recently, Michigan reached 70% of residents 16 and older who have received their first vaccine dose, but cases are surging in the unvaccinated population.

MDHHS and the local health department are monitoring for the COVID-19 omicron variant which had not been detected in the state as of the time of this release. Residents are advised that the presence of variants makes it even more important to get vaccinated, including the booster doses to increase protection, wear masks, and take other precautions.

In addition to getting vaccinated and wearing masks – particularly indoors and in crowded areas – other things people can do to protect themselves and their loved ones include:

- Getting tested for COVID-19, especially before gatherings.
- Physically distancing from others and avoiding crowds.
- Washing hands frequently with soap and water and cleaning hands with alcohol-based hand rub.
- Covering your mouth and nose with a bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Self-isolating until you recover if you develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19.

MDHHS has issued [a public health advisory](#) that all Michiganders, regardless of vaccination status, should wear a mask in indoor public settings and those who are not fully vaccinated or who are immunocompromised should avoid large crowds or gatherings.

Vaccination continues to be our most powerful tool. The health department offers convenient COVID-19 vaccination clinics for all area residents and visitors 12 and older. Parent consent is required for minors. Anyone may call the Michigan COVID-19 hotline at 888-535-6136 if they have questions or are not able to find a time or date that works for them and/or their child. Clinics offer clients a choice of Pfizer, Moderna, or J&J's Janssen unless otherwise noted. Upcoming clinics for appointments only include

Monday, December 6th and Friday, December 10th - Benzie's Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic

- BLDHD Benzie Office, 6051 Frankfort Hwy, Benzonia, MI 49616
- Time: 8:00-12:00 and 1- 4:30pm
- Vaccine: Pfizer (open to 5-11 years old ONLY, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
- To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)

Monday, December 6th and Friday, December 10th- Leelanau's Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic

- BLDHD Leelanau Office, 7401 E Duck Lake Rd, Lake Leelanau, MI 49653
- Time: 8:00-12:00 and 1- 4:30pm
- Vaccine: Pfizer (open to 5-11 years old ONLY, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
- To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)

Tuesday, December 7th – Community COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic

- VFW Post 7731, 7475 E Duck Lake Rd, Lake Leelanau, MI 49653
- Time: 12:00-5:00pm
- Vaccine: Moderna, Janssen, and Pfizer (open to 12 or older, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
- To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)

Wednesday, December 8th – Community COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic

- Crystal Cafe, 1681 Benzie Hwy, Benzonia, MI 49616
- Time: 12:00- 5:00pm
- Vaccine: Moderna, Janssen, and Pfizer (open to 12 or older, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
- To schedule an appointment: [Click here](#)

Starting January 5th, 2022, BLDHD's Community COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic in Benzie County will be held at Platte River Association in Honor, MI. All planned COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic in December will be held at Crystal Café.

COVID-19 Testing

The health department is offering free COVID-19 testing with the support of HONU lab. The test is free, and no doctor's order is required. Pre-registration is not required, but it is recommended to reduce time spent at the testing clinic, and walk-ins are welcome. Testing is available:

- On Monday and Thursday from 10 - 3pm at the VFW Post 7731. To register visit: <https://honu.dxresults.com/AntigenSignup?LabId=2470>
- On Tuesday and Thursday from 10 am – 3pm at the Crystal Café in Benzonia. To register visit: <https://honumg.info/CrystalCafe>

COVID-19 Case Counts

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is reporting the following case information:

- On Tuesday, November 30, 56 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (20), and Leelanau (36), and one new COVID-19 associated death in Leelanau County.
- On Wednesday, December 1, 45 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (21) and Leelanau (24).
- Today, December 2, 38 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Benzie (7) and Leelanau (31).

As of 4:00 p.m. today, the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is reporting:

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 2,129, Leelanau– 2,214
- Active COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 403, Leelanau– 447
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 1,686, Leelanau– 1,738
- Confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Benzie – 40, Leelanau– 29
- Hospitalized: 253 total; 14 currently

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