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PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

For Immediate Release

April 17, 2020

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department COVID-19 Update

As of 2pm today, the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is reporting no new cases of COVID-19 bringing the total number of positive cases to six with no positive cases reported in Benzie County. All close contacts of positive cases have been identified, contacted, and placed in isolation and quarantine as needed. The Health Department has recorded 133 individuals tested with 28 pending results. The State of Michigan has reported 30,293 cases and 2,227 deaths.

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department wants to remind residents that testing criteria for COVID-19 recently expanded per the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). As of Tuesday, April 14th Michigan's priority testing now includes the previously identified high risk individuals with symptoms as well as people with mild symptoms as long as testing supplies are available. We also want to caution residents that expanded testing criteria and increased testing will likely cause an increase in positive COVID-19 case counts.

There are testing facilities in both counties available to those who have symptoms and have an appointment. Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital continues to offer a drive through testing facility in Benzie County and we are also proud to highlight a new drive through testing facility at Northwest Michigan Health Services Inc. in Leelanau County. This week, 33 people have already been able to obtain testing there and they will also assist anyone who may not have a provider. Please contact your primary care provider with assistance with direction for testing. Increased testing is needed to gather more information about where and how COVID-19 is spreading in our communities, and how to reduce its spread.

Lisa Peacock, Health Officer shared that "There are unmistakable signs that we are making progress in our communities together. Expanded testing, continued contact tracing and each day our hospitals are able to adequately care for patients provides us with early evidence of success in our efforts to flatten the curve. We hope everyone can feel encouraged by this quiet progress."

Additional and updated information can be found on our [Website](#) and [Facebook](#) or by calling our public information line 231-882-2197. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has a statewide hotline for COVID-19. Public health and other experts will answer health-related questions about COVID-19. The hotline will be open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 1-888-535-6136.

Please show essential workers your gratitude by staying home, making infrequent, consolidated trips out to conduct essential business. Essential is defined as 'necessary to protect or sustain life'.

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