

COVID-19 Conversations with Community Partners

June 10, 2020

Questions and Answers

- 1. For weddings and other group get togethers, where you have family members that have been together, can they be seated together rather than at a social distance.**

Restaurants and churches are taking the approach that, those family members that have been together, are considered a group and do not need to social distance.

- 2. Is there any insight into the COVID-19 death rate of 9.6% in Michigan. In New York City it is about 8.96%, yet I hear that death rate is < 1% .**

We do not know a complete answer to that question as data is still being analyzed. We do know that there are some major disparities in the death rate and those disparities are an important part of Michigan's data.

- 3. It was reported on National Public Radio (NPR) yesterday that suggested new COVID cases two weeks after Memorial Day spiked to 2,000.**

We have not seen that data yet but will investigate. Locally we have not seen a spike in the number of cases since Memorial Day.

- 4. Can you point me toward posters for social distancing in parks and on beaches?**

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department website has many resources available which also include social distancing. <http://www.bldhd.org/coronavirus-covid-19> The Health Department has been receiving a lot of good questions about graduation parties. The Governor's Executive Order 2020-114 is a great reference guide as well as following guidelines that are similar in the way restaurants are handling groups.

- 5. There has been a lot of recent media on if a person who is asymptomatic is infectious or not.**

We do not know for sure at what point an asymptomatic person is infectious. This is why the Health Department treats them as if they are infectious and takes all the necessary precautions.

- 6. It is reported that many people who have gotten tested are waiting over two weeks for results. This is beyond the normal quarantine period and misses many contacts that should have been isolated. Is there a plan to get a higher number of tests processed more quickly?**

The delay in test results has been one of the most difficult response in this pandemic. It is completely unacceptable to wait that long for a test result. We are working with partners to try and correct the issues causing the delays.

- 7. When should young children be tested? How should a children's center use the Health Department as a resource? When in the process should we engage the Health Department? Who should we contact?**

Children are included in the same priority groups as adults. Children exhibiting symptoms, especially those showing symptoms as those in the auto immune Kawasaki disease, should be tested right away. Routine testing of children has not been included in any plans yet. The plan for guidance for schools is already in place and can be found at the BLDHD.org website or click on <https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98178-522259--,00.html> . Michelle Klein works with schools all the time and can be reached via email at mklein@bldhd.org or call her at 231-256-0210.

8. How readily available is testing in Northern Michigan?

Anyone who wants to be tested, can get a test. The Health Department is looking at making scheduling easier by working with community partners. People can contact their medical provider for testing information or call the Northwest Michigan Health Services hotline at 231-652-5292 to schedule an appointment.

9. If I had an immunity test and I was negative, does that mean that I do not have COVID-19 at this time?

The only test to determine if someone has COVID-19 or not is the COVID-19 test. If the immunity test was negative, that means you have not developed the COVID-19 antibodies and have not had COVID-19 in the past.

In closing, we would like to thank everyone for their time and efforts in keeping the community safe. The Health Department provides daily updates. If you would want to be added to our emailing list, please contact Michelle Klein at mklein@bldhd.org