

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: March 12, 2020

END DATE: March 20, 2020

CONTACT: John McKellar
Health Officer

PHONE: (810) 257-3588

RE: **Genesee County Health Department COVID-19 Update**

There are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Genesee County as of March 12, 2020. Officials from the Genesee County Health Department, Ascension Genesys, Hurley Medical Center and McLaren-Flint are in regular contact with each other, as well as with state and federal agencies, to coordinate preparedness efforts for COVID-19 in Genesee County. All three health systems continue to implement visitor restrictions and encourage community members to stay home when they are sick and wait until they are well to visit anyone that is in the hospital.

The Genesee County Health Department and all three health systems encourage community members to practice good hand and respiratory hygiene at all times (washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer if soap and water are unavailable, covering cough/sneeze with tissue and throwing used tissue away, washing hands afterward). These healthcare organizations stress the importance of staying home when you are sick and washing your hands often as the most effective ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19, influenza and other communicable diseases in our community. They also encourage individuals to clean frequently touched surfaces often with a sanitizing wipe or household cleanser, and avoid close contact with people who are sick. Everyone is advised to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth, and stay home from work, school, or social gatherings when they are sick.



The symptoms of COVID-19 may be mild to severe and include: fever, cough, difficulty breathing. Community members with symptoms of a respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, should contact their personal health care provider for guidance on what to do next. Please inform the Health care provider office if you have been in close contact with someone that has tested positive for COVID-19, or if you have recently traveled from an area with widespread COVID-19 illness. Health care providers and the CDC recommend use of phone triage and/or telehealth for an initial medical consultation because these can be used without leaving your home and potentially exposing community members.

Do not go to the hospital emergency room unless essential. Emergency rooms need to be able to serve those with the most critical needs. If you have symptoms like cough, fever, or other respiratory problems, contact your personal healthcare provider first. Even if you are not ill, avoid visiting hospitals, long term care facilities or nursing homes to the extent possible. If you do need to visit one of these facilities, limit your time there and keep 6 feet away from patients to help avoid the spread of respiratory disease.

For additional information about COVID-19 preparedness and response, please visit www.gchd.us/coronavirus.

Genesee County Health Department. Your Health. Our Work

###