March 22, 2020
Press Release

Lincoln Trail District Health Department (LTDHD) has received confirmation of a positive Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) case in Hardin County bringing the total of confirmed cases to 2 for the county and 3 for the LTDHD service region (1 Nelson). All three cases are isolated at home.

Conducting contact investigations is a priority for LTDHD. The goals of a contact investigation are to successfully stop the transmission and prevent future cases of COVID-19. LTDHD will conduct an investigation of all contacts to the patient. These individuals will be notified as soon as they have been identified. If you are not contacted by this office, then you are considered as having no more risk than the general public at this time.

Due to the limited amount of testing resources available currently, we must assume that we have more COVID-19 within our communities than what is reported. As testing increases, we should expect more cases to be identified. Actions such as the Governor’s Executive Orders to reduce contact between people and the Public Health Department’s guidance on social distancing are the best measures to avoid coming into contact with COVID-19. Many individuals will have no or very mild symptoms and may not realize that they have the virus and could be spreading it to others. This is especially true in children. This is why it is so important to avoid crowds, stay 6‘ apart when you must go in public places, and reduce the opportunity to come into contact with the virus.

While testing does help public officials track the spread of the disease, it does not change the course of treatment for those testing positives at this time. Those with mild symptoms that are well enough to stay home should do so. Treatment for those well enough to stay home includes over the counter fever reducers, cold and flu medicines, staying hydrated, and getting plenty of rest. Please self-isolate to reduce the spread of your illness to others living in your home. Those who are having difficulty breathing should seek care.
Personal Prevention Measures

- Avoid close contact and public gatherings. To avoid close contact, stay at least 6 feet away from others.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. To avoid coughing into your hands, you can cough into your elbow.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for “at least 20 seconds”, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Community

- Practice social distancing (6 feet away). Do not attend or participate in any public activities.
- Inquire about work from home options with your employer. Conduct meetings via phone, web, or other methods that do not require meeting face to face.
- Implement environmental surface cleaning measures in homes, businesses, and other locations, including frequently touched surfaces and objects, i.e., tables, doorknobs, toys, desks, and computer keyboards. Use regular household cleaning spray or wipes as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control.

People at Higher Risk for COVID-19 Complications

Adults over 60 and people who have severe chronic medical conditions like heart, lung or kidney disease seem to be at higher risk for more serious COVID-19 illness. If you are at increased risk for COVID-19, it is especially important for you to take the following actions to reduce your risk of exposure:

- Stay at home as much as possible.
- Make sure you have access to several weeks of medications and supplies in case you need to stay home for prolonged periods of time.
- Do not go out unless absolutely necessary. If you must go out in public, keep away from others, limit close contact (6 feet away) and wash your hands often.
- Avoid crowds.
Do not seek medical care if you just want to be tested. That only taxes existing resources that should be used for those who are truly ill. Use the following guidance prior to seeking care:

**Worried, but well**
- Do not go to a hospital, ER or doctor’s office. Many practices are requiring calling ahead of any in person visits as well as offering telehealth visits. If you are worried-well, going to a hospital or doctor’s office just further overwhelms medical staff and adds to a higher concentration of people. If you are worried-well stay home. If you do not have symptoms and get tested, it is highly likely that you will get inaccurate results.

**Feeling ill, but otherwise would not have sought out medical care**
- If you have a fever or cough and, if it were not for COVID-19, you would not have otherwise sought care, do not seek care at an ER, hospital or doctor’s office. If you want advice, call the state hotline (1.800.722.5725) or call your local health care provider. Telehealth options may be a possibility as well.
- A positive COVID-19 does not change the course of treatment if you are well enough to stay home. This includes over the counter fever reducers, cold/flu products, staying hydrated, getting plenty of rest, increased hygienic practices as described above, as well as isolating away from others including pets within your home.

**If you are sick and feel you have an emergency**
- Call your doctor or seek medical care. Please call ahead if you are able so that healthcare providers are prepared to receive you. The hospitals across the state stand ready to serve.