

District Health Department No. 4

For Immediate Release

Date: April 26, 2021



District Health Department No. 4 announces two additional variants found in three NE Michigan counties, urges precautions

District Health Department No. 4 (DHD4) has been notified of 15 confirmed cases of COVID-19 variants across Alpena, Cheboygan and Presque Isle Counties; B.1.429 (14 cases) and B.1.427 (1 case). The individuals have completed isolation. The cases were identified through routine active surveillance by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

Labeled as “Variants of Concern,” B.1.427 and B.1.429, show evidence of an increase in transmissibility, more severe disease (e.g. increased hospitalizations), significant reduction in neutralization by antibodies generated during previous infection or vaccination, reduced effectiveness of treatments or vaccines, or diagnostic detection failures, according to the CDC. As more coronavirus variants dominate, it is crucial to continue taking COVID-19 precautions. Without these measures we will see large amounts of individuals having to quarantine due to COVID-19 exposures.

While we may begin to see a plateau in reported cases, greater circulation of more contagious variants can lead to another spike, especially as the weather warms and we engage in more in-person activities. “Everyone must continue to do their part to prevent COVID-19 from spreading further,” said Devin Spivey, DHD4 Community Health Director/Epidemiologist. “COVID fatigue is real and we are all feeling it, but it is vital that we continue to follow the proven mitigation strategies to prevent us from losing the progress we’ve made, says Spivey.”

Based on available evidence, current tests and vaccines for COVID-19 also work against this new variant. Protective actions that prevent the spread of COVID-19 will also prevent the spread of the new variants:

- Wear a mask covering mouth and nose around others
- Keep at least 6 feet apart from others
- Wash hands frequently
- Avoid crowded areas or indoor gatherings
- Ventilate indoor spaces if around others
- Seek testing if ill, exposed, or after travel
- PLEASE follow isolation or quarantine guidance if ill, exposed, or waiting on test results
- Get vaccinated when vaccine becomes available to you

For additional COVID-19 information and COVID-19 vaccination clinic info visit www.dhd4.org/covid19, follow us on Facebook, or contact us through our covid hotlines: 989-358-7936 or covid19@dhd4.org.

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