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For Immediate Release

Iowa County Health Department

Director/Health Officer

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Rise in Cases Continues, Count at 1,129; Dashboard Update

Iowa County - The Health Department reports an increase of 213 cases this past week bringing the total of cases to 1,129. During the previous week, 231 cases were reported, the week prior the increase was 164 cases and the week prior to that, 105 cases. Cases are in all age ranges and across the entire county. See <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/county.htm> for a breakdown of the location of positive cases by census track. The number of individuals that have recovered is 784, meaning 345 cases are active.

“We continue to experience a sustained and very high volume of cases each day”, states Debbie Siegenthaler, Director, Iowa County Health Department. The average case increase each day is now 30.14 up from a daily average of 26.36 at last dashboard report, and up from an average of 16.86 the week prior. The percent of positive tests has increased to 14.7 %, up from 14.5%. These metrics both remain at red status.

“The Health Department is struggling to keep up with the volume of cases reported each day, added Siegenthaler. “Crisis standards for contact tracing has been implemented which means that our priority is to contact positive cases only. As a result, we are unable to reach out to close contacts. If you are awaiting a test result, please be sure to remain quarantined. If you test positive, please isolate yourself and let your close contacts know to self-quarantine for 14 days and consider being tested”, added Siegenthaler. For more information, please visit <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02599.pdf>

We continue to be exceptionally concerned about hospital capacity, locally and regionally. Our local Dashboard includes local metrics for Upland Hills Health. Facility use status represents medical surge and Intensive Care Unit (ICU) capacity. Staffing status indicates the number of available staff to care for the volume of patients. Both metrics remain red. Critical supply status reflects adequate levels of critical supplies. This metric remains green.

Our regional health care infrastructure metric represents regional hospital bed use and is currently yellow, as 87% of regional hospital beds are in use. In addition, 86% of total regional ICU beds are in use. It is important to note that this metric simply reports bed capacity and doesn't measure staffing. There are concerns across the region as large numbers of hospital staff continue to get sick or quarantined due to exposure to the virus. Regional hospital capacity can be found on the DHS website <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/disease.htm>

“In our community, so many people and systems are working incredibly hard to respond, including people in health care, public health, EMS, emergency management, to name just a few. We continue to ask the community to be an essential part of the response. Please do your part in slowing spread so that hospitals have the room and staff to care for those that need it. This response is about all of us working together for the good of the community. The lives of community members depends on unity.” Siegenthaler urged.

We are asking the Iowa County community to:

- Limit indoor gatherings to 10 people or less.
- Limit outdoor gatherings to 25 people or less.
- Post-pone or cancel all non-essential events, gatherings and travel

In addition, we reiterate diligence in the following:

- Wear a cloth face covering in public settings, especially when it is difficult to practice physical distancing.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from other people when you leave your home.
- Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Iowa County status remains at the CRITICALLY HIGH activity level. The “critically high” category distinguishes counties and regions that have case rates (or case burdens) of greater than 1,000 cases per 100,000 residents over the last 14 days. This is 10 times higher than the “high” category. These enhancements to the [Disease Activity Dashboard](#) give Wisconsinites a better picture of the impact of COVID-19 in our state.

Iowa County Dashboard Metrics

Epidemiology: Our percentage of positive cases continues to increase, now at 14.7%, this metric remains red. The average cases reported daily metric increased to 30.14, remaining in the red. The Outbreak metric remains red.

Healthcare Status: Testing rate remains green with an average of 205.7 tests performed daily. We encourage anyone with symptoms to contact his/her health care provider to be tested. Local health care partner’s facility use status (represents med surge and ICU capacity) has changed to red. Staffing status indicates the number of available staff to care for the volume of patients and is currently red. Critical supply status reflects at least fourteen days’ worth of supplies. This metric remains green. Our regional health care infrastructure metric represents regional hospital bed use and is currently yellow, as 87% of regional hospital beds are in use. In addition, 86.3% of total regional ICU beds are in use.

Public Health Status: Community spread remains in red, as 43% of cases are reporting no known source of transmission in the past two weeks. Our goal is that fewer than 20% of cases have no known source of transmission. This value is a reflection of current information, some data is missing, as not all cases have been in contact with the health department. Our contact tracing efforts dropped some, now at 86%. This metric is dependent on individuals either answering the phone or returning our calls, which remains an issue. Our health department volume and staffing metric remains red. We continue to see an increase in cases and have had to modify our outreach to close contacts.

Emergency Management: Our emergency management partners have changed to yellow status. PPE demand continues to be up and the supply chain is experiencing issues with gloves, gowns and N95 masks.

School Capacity Indicator Dashboard <https://www.iowacounty.org/COVID-19IowaCountySchoolGuidance>

This dashboard contains key dashboard metrics from our Iowa County COVID-19 Dashboard with the addition of the new case rate in the past two weeks. Today, the new case rate is 178 per 10,000, up again, very significantly from last Friday’s value of 155 and the prior week’s value of 99.3.

Date dashboard was updated	Percent of tests that are positive	Average number of cases reported per day	Average number of tests per day	Outbreaks metric	Percentage of cases contracted by community spread
July 20	1.45%	.92	42.8	Red	46%
July 27	2.1%	.71	33.1	Red	30%
August 3	2.6%	1.0	37.7	Red	42%
August 10	3.9%	1.71	43.6	Red	38%
August 17	4.2%	2.5	60	Red	54%
August 24	3.8%	2.0	53	Red	46%
August 31	3.3%	1.5	45	Red	43%
September 8	2.0%	0.93	45.4	Red	38%
September 14	1.3%	0.64	49.7	Red	40%
September 21	2.6%	1.79	70	Red	64%
September 28	3.5%	3.79	107.5	Red	60%
October 5	4.8%	5.57	116.5	Red	51%
October 12	6.8%	8.21	121	Red	43%
October 19	7.5%	11.58	153.8	Red	41%
October 23*	7.9%	11.35	142.9	Red	43%
October 30	8.4%	11.29	133.7	Red	42%
November 6	11.4%	16.86	148.3	Red	42%
November 13	14.5%	26.36	181.8	Red	41%
November 20	14.7%	30.14	205.7	Red	43%

*Shift in day of dashboard update due to data availability.

The next scheduled community testing in Iowa County:

- Thursday, December 3 from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
- Friday, December 4th from 10:00am to 6:00pm -- Wisconsin National Guard

Both tests sites are held at HHS in Dodgeville at the Health and Human Services Center located at 303 West Chapel Street in Dodgeville.

Testing is free and open to anyone (age 5+) who feels they have a need to be tested. Minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian with consent. Appointments are not required, but it is requested that those who wish to be tested pre-register at <https://register.covidconnect.wi.gov>.

People should consider visiting the testing site if:

- * They have had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.
- * They have COVID-19 symptoms
- * They have regular exposure to a large number of people (i.e., people who work in grocery stores)
- * They work closely with high-risk populations (i.e., healthcare workers, people who work with people who are incarcerated, people who work in long-term care facilities)

There are additional testing sites in southwest Wisconsin in Grant, Lafayette and Richland counties. Visit the Iowa County COVID-19 website and/or follow our Facebook page for a list of weekly testing opportunities in southwest Wisconsin.

Upland Hills Hospital continues to provide COVID testing. Please see the Upland Hills website for information on getting tested at their facility.

Important Sources of Information

- **Wisconsin Department of Health Services** <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>
 - Holiday Safety <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/community.htm#-holidays>
- **Iowa County website.** <https://www.iowacounty.org/departments/COVID-19>
- **Upland Hills Health** <https://www.uplandhillshealth.org/patient-visitors/covid-19/>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- **211 Wisconsin** Simply call 211 from your phone <https://211wisconsin.communityos.org/>

Social Media sites:

Iowa County Public Health on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/iowacountyhealthdepartment/>

Upland Hills Health on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/UplandHillsHealthHospital/>

Iowa County Emergency Management on Twitter - <https://twitter.com/ICEMWI>

Iowa County Emergency Management on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/icemwi/>

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