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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NOVEL CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE

Sauk County, WI – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has confirmed five (5) cases of travel-related novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in the United States. There are no confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV in Wisconsin to date, but there are seven (7) patients under investigation in Wisconsin. None of those are in Sauk County. CDC is in the process of testing six people for 2019-nCoV in our state. Results are pending in these cases. Test results for an additional patient under investigation were negative.

While there have been no people identified for testing in Sauk County to date, “the Sauk County Health Department is actively monitoring this outbreak and working with our local, state, and federal partners to be able to respond quickly and effectively when people have symptoms of this virus and a likelihood of exposure,” said Sauk County Health Officer Tim Lawther. “All of the information we have so far shows there is low risk to the general public, but we take new infectious diseases seriously and are preparing our local response should someone in Sauk County have symptoms and potential exposure.”

In order to protect the health of Sauk County residents, The Sauk County Health Department (SCHD) is working with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, CDC, and local healthcare providers to monitor symptoms. SCHD stand’s ready to investigate potential cases, collect specimens, and follow up with patients to see who they have been in contact with.

“We are asking health care providers to routinely ask patients about their travel history, to collect specific information about locations and dates of travel, and to alert the Wisconsin Division of Public Health if a person with recent travel to Wuhan, China has become sick with fever and lower respiratory symptoms,” said Lawther.

Testing for this novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) may be required if you have a fever AND cough or shortness of breath AND you have traveled from Wuhan City, China or been in close contact with someone who is under investigation for 2019-nCoV or is a confirmed 2019-nCoV patient.

When people under investigation for 2019-nCoV are evaluated, clinical samples are collected and submitted to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for testing. That testing can take several days. If there is a confirmed case in Sauk County, details and protective recommendations will be shared with the affected person, or persons, and the public.

Coronavirus isn't rare. In fact, seasonal coronavirus activity typically increases in Wisconsin this time of year, along with influenza and other respiratory viruses. Attention is heightened in this outbreak because it is a new (novel) form of the virus.

"We know people are wondering what to do to protect themselves and their families from this virus. Our best advice is to follow the same steps for avoiding colds and flu, including staying home when you're sick, covering coughs and sneezes, and frequently washing hands," Lawther said. People who are planning a trip to China should keep an eye on news reports and be aware of this rapidly changing situation. People who have returned from China and are feeling sick should contact their health care provider and let them know about the travel and symptoms before going to a clinic, office, or emergency room.

For more information on 2019-nCoV, please visit www.cdc.gov/wuhan.

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