
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TCHC is prepared in the event of coronavirus outbreak

WADENA, Minn. – Jan. 31, 2020 – The World Health Organization has declared a global health emergency due to the spread of the coronavirus (2019-nCoV), and Tri-County Health Care wants to assure the public it has policies and procedures in place in the event of a local outbreak. No cases have been confirmed in Minnesota at this time.

TCHC remains proactive and prepared for any contagious disease and will follow the same protocol with the coronavirus. Patients who are experiencing symptoms – fever, coughing, shortness of breath – AND have traveled from China or have been in contact with someone that has traveled from China in the last 14 days are asked to call ahead. This will allow us to take additional steps to keep all patients and staff safe. Registration at TCHC will also ask new travel questions like if patients have traveled from China or have been in contact with someone who may have been in coronavirus affected areas, and to report symptoms they are experiencing. Patients may also be asked to wear a mask; similar to when presenting with influenza-like illnesses.

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is conducting weekly calls with health organizations for updates on the coronavirus. In addition, the MDH suggests taking the same precautions recommended for avoiding colds and flu, which include washing your hands, staying home when sick and covering your cough.

The risk for contracting the new strain of the coronavirus identified in China remains low for U.S. residents. As of Friday, there were 9,821 reported cases worldwide with a 2 percent fatality rate. For comparison, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates more than 15 million people in the U.S. have gotten sick with influenza since October. More than 150,000 have been hospitalized and there have been more than 8,000 deaths.

Those most at risk for serious complications from influenza are those age 65 or older, children – especially those younger than 6 months who cannot be vaccinated – pregnant women and those with weakened immune systems. These individuals are especially encouraged to get the influenza vaccine.

Check with your local pharmacies or health care facilities to find out where you can receive the influenza vaccine. For more information about influenza, including hand-washing techniques or when you should seek medical attention for influenza-like symptoms, visit cdc.gov or health.state.mn.us.



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ABOUT TRI-COUNTY HEALTH CARE

Tri-County Health Care is a private, not-for-profit health care system based in Wadena, Minnesota. It offers care services such as primary health, surgery, cancer care, diagnostic imaging, obstetrics, orthopedics and rehabilitation. Tri-County operates a hospital and medical clinic in Wadena, as well as five satellite clinics and two physical therapy clinics across Wadena, Todd and Otter Tail counties. Satellite clinic locations include Bertha, Henning, Ottertail, Sebeka and Verndale. Visit TCHC.org.

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