COVID-19 Selectboard Update

March 30, 2020

* As of Sunday 3/29 NH has 258 individuals that tested positive for Coronavirus, up 44 from Saturday. The largest single day increase yet.
* Rockingham County accounts for 100 of the total positive cases, up 14 form Saturday.
* This week NH HSEM and NH DHHS will be providing positive test data at the city and town level, not just county level. This should afford us the opportunity to better plan response and protective actions based on actual risk, not generalizing based on county exposure.
* Unfortunately, to date 3 deaths statewide has been attributed to the Coronavirus, 1 in Rockingham County.
* The Health Officer and Emergency Management has been coordinating with NH DHHS and our Regional Health Network for appropriate response.
* We are continuing our daily monitoring of all fire/EMS employees. This monitoring includes, general health, exhibiting a persistent cough and shortness of breath, as well as recording temperatures twice daily.
* Those with symptoms are immediately sent home, instructed to self-monitor for any change and/or worsening of symptoms for 14 days. If symptoms worsen, they are tested for Coronavirus.
* The fire department currently has 2 employees quarantined at home due to Coronavirus exposure. Both cases involve a spouse working in healthcare treating Coronavirus patients.
* One spouse has tested positive for the virus and is doing much better at home, and the other is awaiting test results. Both employees will be out for 14 days after the last symptom clears, or if they test positive, will be out until at least 4 days after the last symptom clears.
* Health Officer Murray has been working with local food establishments to ensure compliance with the Governors emergency orders and adequate measures are in place for food safety.
* Fire/EMS has been responding to an average number of calls for service. We have yet to see a significant increase in calls volume, but yes, we have responded to patients with worsening Corona like symptoms.
* Our stock of Personal protective equipment remains adequate for our call volume, but an increase in calls over the next couple of weeks will reduce our stock and lead to PPE shortages.
* We have submitted requests to the State of NH EOC for additional PPE, and received protective faceshields last week, but no additional equipment has been received.
* We were excited last week when a drive-thru test site was developed in Exeter, however due to a lack of first responders with symptoms needing a test, the site was cancelled at the last minute. Future sites will be determined based on need and available testing materials.
* A 250 bed medical surge facility has been set up in Durham at the Hamel Rec. Center to assist Exeter Hospital, Portsmouth Regional Hospital, as well as Wentworth Douglass and Frisbee Memorial Hospitals. This site will be staffed when the local hospitals see the need to move less symptomatic patients, to free up space in the hospital for more critical patients.
* Information regarding what resident can do to prevent the spread of the virus is running on most social media platforms and will be kept up-to-date with the most current guidance.
* Residents with jobs not indicated an “essential” should be reminded to only go out into public if absolutely necessary. Trips out for supplies or medical attention are appropriate, but remember to keep social distancing – 6 feet, and wash your hands or use hand sanitizer as often as possible to limit the spread of the virus.