COVID-19 INFORMATION & RESOURCES

3/10/20

To date, Eastern Highland Health District (EHHD) has been maintaining situational awareness through weekly teleconferences with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the CT Department of Public Health (DPH). EHHD are conducting countless activities related to preparedness and communicating regularly with town leaders and community partners.

While we cannot predict the impact of COVID-19 with great certainty, we can assure you that there are many trusted and experienced community partners in our public health system working together to protect our communities. We are grateful for these partnerships.

Below are some categorized key points and links to resources.

Practice Everyday Preventive Actions Now

Practice and remind others of the importance of using everyday preventive actions that can help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses. Yes, these are simple strategies and they work:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Cover your cough and sneeze with a tissue. Throw the tissue in a lined trash container.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Germs spread this way.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily (e.g., tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles) using a regular household detergent and water.
  - If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent and water prior to disinfection. For disinfection, a list of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved products is available at Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Fighting Products. Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Always wash your hands with soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.
- Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious foods.
- Get an annual flu shot…and future vaccines that are developed to fight new communicable illnesses.

Decisions Regarding Cancellation or Postponement of Events and Activities

As of March 11, 2020, there are NO confirmed cases of COVID-19 in eastern Connecticut but we can expect that to change. EHHD are watching for signs that the disease will swell and require more aggressive social distancing measures in our communities such as school closures. Since these measures are very disruptive, they will be implemented based on a current assessment of the evolving situation. EHHD met today with area superintendents to discuss plausible scenarios for school closures or dismissals. Further, EHHD is aware that UConn officials have asked students to bring home their academic supplies, and equipment over spring break in the event the university transitions to online learning before the end of spring break.

On March 9, 2020, Governor Lamont notified Executive Branch agency employees of actions that will be implemented to prevent the spread of coronavirus. The Governor’s declaration of a public health emergency instructs local officials to follow similar guidance. **EHHD recommends member towns to follow this guidance.** This guidance includes in part:

- Cancelling or posting any organized large meetings, conferences or gatherings that are anticipated to have over 100 people in attendance between now and April 30.
• Canceling or discouraging any out of state travel.
• For events or meetings with large numbers of people within arm’s length of each other, encourage those who are at higher risk due to age (70 or older); those with cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, or chronic lung diseases like COPD, as well as those with severely weakened immune systems, to dial in to participate or not attend.

Be Ready by Being Informed: For more resources please see the links below.


Communication resources such as fact sheets and posters: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/index.html


Information for Connecticut residents: ct.gov/coronavirus

Individuals who have general questions that are not answered on these websites can also call 2-1-1 for assistance. The information line is available 24 hours a day and has multilingual assistance and TDD/TTY access for those with a hearing impairment. This line is only intended to be used by individuals who are not experiencing symptoms but may have general questions related to COVID-19. Anyone experiencing symptoms is strongly urged to contact their medical provider to seek treatment.

CT DPH website - Including Behavioral Health resources for coping with stress and talking with children during infectious disease outbreaks: https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Public-Health-Preparedness/Main-Page/2019-Novel-Coronavirus

EHHD page, which has the main links for all of the resources above: www.ehhd.org

Please review the EHHD flyer on Preventing COVID-19 and the Flu is in your hands!