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Horizon Public Health PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Horizon Public Health continues to work closely with healthcare providers, hospitals, and partners to address novel coronavirus in the counties of Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens and Traverse counties. Our agency is taking action to protect the public and keep the community informed. "I'd like to take a moment to thank all those for their hard work, this has been an evolving situation. I really don't think any sector hasn't been impacted by this." says Ann Stehn, Horizon Public Health Administrator. "I'd also like to ask everyone to live your life as if COVID-19 is already in your community... what we know right now is that even if COVID-19 has not been confirmed in your county, it's likely there." says Stehn.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It spreads between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet). It is also possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or possibly their eyes. Frequent washing of your hands and cleaning frequently touched surfaces is a great way to prevent the spread.

As tough Minnesotans, we have reputation to work hard, dig deep and don't give up. What we need to do right now is pause, and put the health of all of us in the forefront. What we want people to do is, if you are sick including: fever, cough, shortness of breath, you need to stay home. In order to slow the spread of COVID-19 we all need to follow these guidelines, which most importantly is stay home if you are sick.

Minnesota Department of Health MDH) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have done a great job of providing up-to-date information on their websites. They also have guidance for protecting yourself and your family during this COVID-19 outbreak. Some activities to start now are:

- Monitor local information about COVID-19 in your community
- Practice social distancing measures when in public and wash your hands frequently
- Create a household plan of action in case of illness in the household or disruption of daily activities due to COVID-19 in the community
- People who are 65 and older or anyone with underlying medical conditions should stay home and avoid gathers.

Many cases of COVID-19 may have mild symptoms and you may not realize they are infected. "Everyone should be suspected of infection" says Stehn. "Even if you're unlikely to get seriously ill, you still have an integral part to play". Therefore we need to presume the true extent of the disease is vastly underestimated. If you have respiratory symptoms, stay home and isolate yourself from household contacts. Seek care by

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888.209.2887 fax

Pope County
211 E Minnesota Ave Suite 100
Glenwood, MN 56334
320.634.7822
320.634.0159 fax

Stevens County
10 E Hwy 28
Morris, MN 56267
320.208.6670
320.589.7433 fax

Traverse County
202 8th Street N, PO Box 23
Wheaton, MN 56296
320.422.7806
320.563.0104 fax

calling your health care provider first when possible. Stay home for at least 7 days after illness onset and/or 72 hours fever-free (without taking fever reducing medication) whichever is longer. If you are a household member or have been in intimate contact with people who have symptoms you should limit your activities in public and monitor symptoms for 14 days after incorporating precautions at home.

If you have additional questions about COVID-19, MDH has two hotlines designated to address concerns: health questions: 1-800-657-3903 (7am-7pm), school and child care questions: 1-800-657-3504 (7am-7pm). If you are on Facebook please follow Horizon Public Health @HorizonPublicHealth and/or visit our website for additional links and information at horizonpublichealth.org.