

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COVID-19 Cases on the Rise in Southwest Nebraska

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) continues to receive reports of high numbers of individuals hospitalized across the state for respiratory illnesses including COVID-19. According to Dr. Matt Donahue, Nebraska State Epidemiologist, these hospitalizations are occurring in both unvaccinated and vaccinated individuals, with most of the vaccinated hospitalizations being in those over 70 years of age and unvaccinated being in those between 30-39 years of age.

The data used to monitor the COVID-19 situation in SW Nebraska is gathered from local clinics and hospitals and their labs which are reporting when they have a positive COVID-19 test result, along with other reportable diseases like influenza and RSV. Vaccination data comes from local pharmacies and medical providers that are required to put all vaccinations given into the Nebraska State Immunization Information System (NESIIS). These and other additional information are gathered during case investigations done by local public health workers, which is then input and processed into the state disease surveillance systems.

This work is being done through the efforts of many dedicated professionals to protect the health of their communities. The multiple layers and processes involved can lead to delays in having the data ready for reporting. For clarification of last week's report on vaccine breakthroughs, 1 was able to be confirmed as fully vaccinated. The rest were either unvaccinated or vaccination status was unknown or unconfirmed at the time of reporting.

SWNPHD had 186 new cases of COVID-19 reported from November 16 to November 22, 2021, with a weekly average of 157 cases per week in the last 30 days. A breakdown by age includes: 0 to 19 – 21; 20 to 29 – 23; 30 to 39 – 22; 40 to 49 – 31; 50 to 59 – 29; 60 to 69 – 32; 70 to 79 – 21; 80 and over – 7. The total number of cases is 5,661. One additional death due to COVID-19 was also reported bringing the total to 76 for southwest Nebraska.

SWNPHD strongly recommends residents protect themselves against the ongoing spread of COVID-19 in southwest Nebraska, which includes avoiding crowds, close contact, and closed spaces, and vaccination against flu and COVID-19 for eligible ages.

SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. The website www.swhealth.ne.gov contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook and can be reached by calling 308-345-4223. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. ###