

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 3/13/2020**

TO: Grant County healthcare providers, infection control staff, supervisory nursing staff, clinic management, school nurses.  
Grant County Emergency Management  
Grant County Media

**FOR INFORMATION CONTACT**

Theresa Adkinson, Administrator  
509-766-7960 ext. 24 [tadkinson@granthealth.org](mailto:tadkinson@granthealth.org)

## **Grant County Now Has Two Confirmed Cases of COVID-19**

### **An additional probable case is under investigation**

**Grant County, WA - GCHD was notified today of a second positive test result of COVID-19 in our county. The second patient, a male Quincy resident in his 60's, has been linked to the first patient from Quincy. This individual has not experienced severe illness and is in isolation.**

**Additionally, a third patient, who has not been linked to the other cases, is under investigation as a "probable" case in south Grant County. This patient, a male in his 40's, did have foreign travel prior to his illness. He is currently hospitalized. More details on this case will be released if confirmed.**

Staff are working overtime to identify and call all those who had close contact with these two individuals to ensure proper quarantines are in place and prevent others from being infected. However, we expect additional cases will be confirmed in our communities.

GCHD completely supports President Trump's Declaration of National Emergency for this outbreak response and Governor Inslee's Executive Order for social distancing, including school closures and banning of large gatherings. A comprehensive national strategy is necessary to shut this pandemic down.

"Anyone staying home from work when sick or telecommuting, cancelling events or modifying business operations to minimize the spread of this virus is doing their civic duty and should be commended by the rest of us. The only way we will stop this pandemic is by separating ourselves from each other and by following simple hygiene and cough etiquette techniques" states Dr. Brzezny, Grant County Health Officer.

**We are urging the public to do their part to help minimize the spread of COVID-19 by doing the following:**

**High Risk People:** People at higher risk of severe illness should stay home and away from large groups of people as much as possible, including public places with a lot of people and large gatherings where there will be close contact with others. People at higher risk include:

- People 60 and older

- People with underlying health conditions including heart disease, respiratory illness and diabetes
- People who have weakened immune systems
- People who are pregnant

**Workplace:** Workplaces should enact measures that allow people who can work from home to do so. Taking these measures can help reduce the number of workers who come into contact with COVID-19 and help minimize absenteeism due to illness.

Employers should consider continued compensation when possible, along with all other measures to sustain those temporarily laid off. We urge all community groups – including social service organizations, faith-based organizations, schools and PTOs, and others – to take the initiative right now to organize efforts to sustain high risk and laid-off people with whom you are associated, with food and household supplies.

Financial institutions should implement all possible policies easing debt, mortgage deadlines, and related obligations for the duration of this pandemic

**Events:** If you can feasibly **avoid bringing groups of 20 or more people together**, consider postponing events and gatherings. This recommendation is for both private and public events. **Gatherings of 250 people or more are prohibited** for the time being under the Governor’s Executive Order.

If you can’t avoid bringing groups of people together:

- Urge anyone who is sick to not attend.
- Encourage those who are at higher risk for coronavirus to not attend.
- Try to find ways to give people more physical space so that they aren’t in close contact as much as possible.
- Encourage attendees to maintain good healthy habits, such as frequent hand washing.
- Clean surfaces frequently. Standard cleaning products are effective against COVID-19.

Ticketholders of fundraising events that have been cancelled due to COVID-19, please consider donation of the cost of your ticket, as opposed to requesting a refund, as many non-profit organizations rely on these funds for charitable causes.

**Schools:** GCHD supports the Governor’s executive order to close schools.

**Healthcare and Long-Term Care (Nursing homes):** Generally, avoid medical settings unless necessary. Healthcare facilities are overwhelmed. If you are feeling sick call your doctor’s office first before going in.

Even if you are not ill, avoid visiting hospitals, long term care facilities or nursing homes to the extent possible. If you do need to visit one of these facilities limit your time there and keep 6 feet away from other patients.

**Do not go to the emergency room unless essential.** Emergency rooms need to be able to serve those with the most critical needs. If you have symptoms like cough, fever, or other respiratory problems, contact your regular doctor first.

**Everybody Can Do Something! Every person can make a difference by doing the following:**

- Avoid going out if you feel sick.
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- Wash hands often and vigorously with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water is not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, saturating the skin surface and rubbing for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick and avoid close contact (less than 6 feet away) with others.
- If you have a cold or cough and need to see a provider, always call first to be sure they know you are coming so their staff can take appropriate precautions.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Don't shake hands, bump elbows.
- Use sanitizing wipes or solutions (normal household products work) on frequently touched surfaces and objects at home and at work.
- Take good care of yourself to stay healthy, including adequate sleep and good nutrition.

“We would like to thank all of our staff, healthcare partners, Grant County Sheriff's Emergency Management Division, volunteers, and the community for your amazing cooperation. I know you are having to make tough choices that are impacting your way of life. We are all in this together and it takes a dedicated team like you to slow the spread of this virus in our community,” Theresa Adkinson GCHD Administrator.

#### **Additional Resources:**

Washington Department of Health: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

COVID-19 FAQ: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/NovelCoronavirusFactSheet.pdf>

GCHD: <http://granthealth.org/2019-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov/>

#### **Consultation:**

- **Healthcare Consultation:**

Maria Vargas, Community Public Health Manager

(509) 766-7960 ext. 19 or [mvargas@granthealth.org](mailto:mvargas@granthealth.org)

- **Media Inquiries:**

Theresa Adkinson, Administrator

(509) 793-3520 during non-business hours 509-766-7960 ext. 24 during business hours.

- **Grant County General Public:** (509) 766-7960 ext. 39 or email to [info@granthealth.org](mailto:info@granthealth.org)