

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 06/01/2020

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

Grant County Emergency Management

Grant County Mayors

Grant County Media

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT

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COVID-19 Outbreak Summer Wood Alzheimer's Special Care Center
Grant County is seeing an uptick in COVID-19 Cases



Phase 2

Moses Lake, WA –Six people who live or work at Summer Wood Alzheimer's Special Care Center in Moses Lake have tested positive for COVID-19. One individual is hospitalized, and no deaths have been reported in connection with the outbreak as of Monday afternoon. We anticipate the remainder of the test results within the next few days.

GCHD began investigating on Friday and throughout the weekend after one resident and one staff member working at Summer Wood tested positive after becoming symptomatic. All residents and most of the staff were tested over the weekend. The positive residents and staff members are isolated at the facility or at home. Residents and staff members who were possibly exposed and those with symptoms are quarantined at the facility or home awaiting their test results.

GCHD is also investigating and testing at an additional senior care facility who had one symptomatic staff member test positive and following up with a childcare facility that had two children test positive.

"We are deeply concerned for the residents of our senior care facilities," said Dr. Alexander Brzezny, Grant County Health Officer. "As we open up our communities, we will see more people with COVID-19. The rapid growth of new cases during the last two weeks is particularly alarming. All of us, including healthcare workers and families serving those most at risk, need to be mindful of our personal activities which increase the risk of transmission. We should continue to place 6 feet between us, wear masks, and wash hands. We need to continue working as a community, just like we did at the beginning, to reduce the risk of severe illness from COVID-19 in our vulnerable residents."

Forty-seven (47) COVID-19 cases were reported over the past two weeks. With Grant County now in Phase 2 of the Safe Start Washington plan, we must continue to be vigilant when meeting with friends and families outside of our household. We continue to see cases linked to gathering such as BBQs and celebrations. For now, the increase in cases has been in younger populations, which has resulted in fewer hospitalizations. To that end, people over the age of 65 and those with underlying health conditions should continue to stay home and stay healthy to limit their risk. While we are experiencing a surge in cases, we all should be doing everything we can to keep this virus out of our loved one's homes.

Dr. Brzezny's statement in a recent editorial.

All of us have sacrificed something to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Many have lost jobs, our kids have suffered, our elders are sheltering in place, and our economy is hit. But especially now is not the time to let up. Physical distancing of more than 6 feet should be integrated into our lives as much as possible in the foreseeable future. Using face coverings and washing our hands seem like a no-brainer. An increasing trend in cases could mean that our "reopening" could be rolled back again.

So please allow me this opportunity to once more ask you and urge you strongly to use face coverings together with physical distancing in Grant County and beyond. Using a face covering shows that we care about each other and about human lives in general—a simple act of citizenry during these trying times. I expect more counties, if not our state, enacting similar directives soon. The way I look at it, we have little to lose by wearing a face covering.

I wish to thank you all for your patience and sacrifice, for your acts of kindness, words of support, and your willful cooperation in this fight as we continue to kick the strength out of this virus together, no matter any disagreements.

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