

Latest Update From Geauga Public Health

3/20/2020 6:15 AM

Public Health is back at it. Our Health Commissioner writes:

I have a big ask for this weekend. Please take the time to make a plan about how you can best take care of you, your families, as well as others in the community who otherwise will go through this alone. Hoarding is NOT a plan. It is just a selfish and irrational move when we have a strong food (and toilet paper) delivery infrastructure. Just think about who is going to do well-check or social phone calls with a lonely relative or neighbor. Is it possible to get a friend's grocery list and take turns shopping for each other. There are lots of little things we can do with some effort, some time, and some compassion.

All models suggest this will get much worse fairly soon. At the national level we are seeing case numbers increase by about 30% each day. Today, we have about 10,000 cases that we know of. If we continue the path of a 30% increase every day, in only two weeks, we will have more than 300,000 cases in the U.S and we will approach 12 million two weeks after that.

I am so proud of how our Governor listens to his public health experts and then follows their guidance when he creates policy. I am so confused as to why every state is not being as proactive as Ohio. Even more confusing is why the public in general is waiting to be told what they cannot do before voluntarily doing those same things on their own when we know how urgent this is. So many people complain about a nanny state. I don't like being told what to do either. But right now, we have far too many people demonstrating an inability to make smart but difficult decisions on their own. We can and must do better.

Geauga County, we're doing great so far with only one case (as of this moment) but we absolutely expect things will get worse. The earlier you will commit to staying home unless you truly need to go out in public, the better we will all be as residents of Geauga County. Don't wait to be told you can't go out before you take the collectively responsible steps to stay in.

There are many of you (us) out there who truly do need to continue working (while we are well) in order to keep the food, utilities, pharmaceuticals, and health care system operational. That includes an incredible number of folks who are in food service, maintenance, and many public employees who serve you daily in often unrecognized ways. You are too often overlooked when we start to call out the heroes. Our thanks go out to all of you!



GEAUGA PUBLIC HEALTHSM

Promoting and Protecting Community Health

470 Center St., Building 8, Chardon, OH 44024-1071
440.279.1900 • www.geaugacountyhealth.org

Thomas Quade, MA, MPH, CPH, FRSPH
Health Commissioner

March 15, 2020

Press Release

For More Information, Contact:

Tom Quade, Health Commissioner
Phone: (440) 279-1900
Email: TQuade@GeaugaCountyHealth.org

First positive case of COVID-19 in Geauga County underscores imperative of social distancing

Chardon, Ohio— Geauga Public Health has received its first reported COVID-19 case and strongly urges all residents to adhere to the Governor's orders and to expand upon them voluntarily where possible.

The number of confirmed reported cases of COVID-19 continues to rise sharply in Ohio. As of this moment there is one confirmed reported case in Geauga County. We can assume three things with great confidence:

First, models suggest there are more people in Geauga County who are already infected and contagious but who are experiencing such mild symptoms that they have not sought medical care and have not been tested. Planning is currently underway to increase access to testing.

Second, the number of confirmed cases will increase moving forward. We are on the front end of this public health threat and should expect our routines to change significantly in the months to come.

Third, because there is no vaccine, the only strategies we have at hand to address the pandemic depend on everyone changing their normal behaviors such as practicing social distancing. These strategies are most effective when they are applied preemptively.

In the past few days, the Governor of Ohio has ordered all K-12 schools closed through April 3rd at the earliest, banning gatherings of 100 people excluding religious services until further notice, and the closure of all bars and dine-in options for all restaurants. The Geauga County Health Commissioner strongly supports these measures. Commissioner Quade said, "These strategies will save lives. How many lives will be saved will depend on the degree to which all Ohioans adhere not only to these orders but also the degree to which they are able to generalize the strategies voluntarily to other settings." Quade believes that the Governor has not called for the cancellation of religious services because of the separation of church and state but he cautions that the principles of social distancing apply as much in those settings as they do anywhere else. Finally, Commissioner Quade wants to acknowledge the challenges and sacrifices this new normal will entail but reminds us that we are all working together to save lives.

###



GEAUGA PUBLIC HEALTHSM

Promoting and Protecting Community Health

470 Center St., Building 8, Chardon, OH 44024-1071
440.279.1900 • www.geaugacountyhealth.org

Thomas Quade, MA, MPH, CPH, FRSPH
Health Commissioner

Press Release

For More Information, Contact:

Tom Quade, Health Commissioner
Phone: (440) 279-1900
Email: TQuade@GeaugaCountyHealth.org

Geauga Public Health links the Public to Accurate COVID-19 information

Chardon, Ohio–March 8, 2020- Geauga Public Health encourages the public to take advantage of credible sources of accurate information regarding COVID-19.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has a website that offers credible and accurate information and updates about COVID-19 in Ohio. The ODH website can be found at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/>. ODH has also recently set up a call center to answer questions from the public. That toll free number is 1-833-4ASKODH (1-833-427-5634).

According to Geauga County Health Commissioner Tom Quade, “We are fortunate that the State Health Department has the capacity to update their website daily if not even more frequently than that. The state’s capacity surpasses our own in this regard.” Geauga Public Health’s Population Health Division, led by Director of Nursing, Dr. Christine Wyers, currently employs one Planning and Communications Chief who is currently heavily engaged in COVID-19 surveillance, two Public Health Nurses, two Health Educators, and is currently seeking to fill a vacant Epidemiologist position. Health Commissioner Quade says, “We are currently focusing on helping the public delay disease spread and prepare for the inevitable disruption of normal routines once cases are found. Once we start getting cases, priority one will be case investigation and mitigation. We run a very lean agency and expect our capacity to be tested. That said, I have every confidence in my team and know what they are capable of when we have all hands on deck.”

There are currently no identified cases in Ohio but we anticipate that will change as the disease continues to be found in an increasing number of states nationwide.

###