News Release

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COVID-19 Hospitalizations Have Frederick Health and Frederick County Health Department Urging Residents to Enjoy Holidays Safely

FREDERICK, MD -- As hospitalizations for COVID-19 continue to rise, the Frederick County Health Department and Frederick Health are working together to encourage county residents to take steps to enjoy the holidays safely.

"While we have been focused on the number of COVID-19 cases for many months now, this is an appropriate time to shift focus to the number of hospitalizations our healthcare system is experiencing," said Dr. Barbara Brookmyer, Health Officer at Frederick County Health Department. "We want our friends and family who need medical care to get the level of care they require without delay. We have the tools we need to reduce the number of people going to our hospital with COVID-19, tools like vaccines, testing, contact tracing, masking, avoiding crowds, and making smart choices about what activities to participate in based on the risk."

"We expect the virus to continue circulating in our community and cause significant illness through the winter, and our actions can keep our loved ones safer through the holidays," said Dr. Brookmyer.

Increased hospitalizations are straining resources and staff. At Frederick Health, President & CEO Tom Kleinhanzl said the number of COVID patients continues to rise at an alarming rate.

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"As of December 14th, we have 63 COVID-19 positive inpatients hospitalized, our highest numbers in months." Kleinhanzl said. "Of these patients, the overwhelming majority are unvaccinated, which means that this recent surge was entirely preventable."

"To not overwhelm our healthcare system, we must get ahead of this virus. The best way to assist our staff is for everyone in the community to get vaccinated, get your booster, continue to wear masks indoors, and exercise good judgment during this holiday season." added Cheryl Cioffi, Chief Operating Officer with Frederick Health.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken an incredible toll on our Frederick County community, impacting families physically, mentally, and financially. Local resources such as food or rental assistance are listed at FrederickCountyMD.gov/COVIDHelp. For community members who may be traveling over the holidays, CDC has updated travel guidelines, as well as tips on how to enjoy the holidays safely.

Information on vaccinations, testing, and treatment are listed below:

Vaccinations:
- Health Department vaccination clinics are posted on FrederickCountyMD.gov/CovidVaccine
- Frederick Health vaccination information is available here.
- To search for additional vaccination sites, visit marylandvax.org or call 855-MDGoVax (855-634-6829)

Testing:
- Hillcrest/Golden Mile, 1100 W. Patrick St., Unite H, Frederick, MD 21703
  - Run by Frederick County Health Department.
  - Hours: 10am-6pm
  - Type of clinic: Walk-in
  - No order required.

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- Frederick Health Village, 1 Frederick Health Way, Frederick, MD 21701
    - Run by Frederick Health Hospital
    - Hours: 8am-12pm
    - Type of clinic: Drive-thru
    - A doctor's COVID-19 test order or a free self-test order is now required to get a COVID-19 test. Please note that you will NOT be able to get a COVID-19 test at the Frederick Health Village location without a test order. You can call 240-316-4970 between 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. to obtain your self-test order.
- To search for additional testing sites, visit Covidtest.Maryland.gov
- At-home testing is another option for people who may have been exposed to COVID-19, who are having symptoms, or who want to test before visiting family and friends. Home test kits can be found in many pharmacies. Limited quantities of free test kits will be distributed at Frederick County Public Library branches when available; visit our Testing website for updates on availability.

Treatment:
- Frederick Health offers Monoclonal Antibody treatment for anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 and has had mild to moderate symptoms for seven days or less qualifies for this treatment. Potential patients can find out if they qualify by speaking directly with their provider and getting a referral for the treatment. https://www.frederickhealth.org/patients-visitors/covid-19-information/monoclonal-antibody-clinic/

Frederick Health will work to share local hospitalization data on their website FrederickHealth.org/COVID19. Frederick County Health Department has county data available on the COVID-19 dashboard at FrederickCountyMD.gov/CovidStats. Please note, currently the Health Department is unable to update case and death data due to statewide network issues.

For more information and resources, visit Health.FrederickCountyMD.gov/COVID19

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