Wood County reports first deaths from coronavirus (COVID-19)

BOWLING GREEN — Two Wood County residents who were being treated for coronavirus (COVID-19) have died.

The deceased individuals included a woman in her 80s, and a man in his 60s with underlying health conditions. No additional information will be provided in order to protect personal privacy.

"Our hearts go out to these people's family and friends. We can only imagine how difficult this must be for them," said Wood County Health Commissioner Ben Batey. "I also want to extend sympathy toward everyone who is fighting this illness and who's been affected by the coronavirus pandemic."

"We know COVID-19 is going to continue having significant impacts on our communities, in Wood County and across our state and nation. This is an unfortunate reminder of how serious of a threat this virus is, and why it's so important that people stay home as much as possible and follow the other public health guidance to prevent COVID-19 from spreading."

As of Wednesday afternoon, 40 cases of COVID-19 had been confirmed in Wood County. These are the first Wood County residents known to have died due to coronavirus. The virus is believed to be present in many areas, even if only a few COVID-19 cases have been confirmed. Updated local statistics are available at www.WoodCountyHealth.org.

Pay attention for potential COVID-19 symptoms including fever, cough and shortness of breath. Call before visiting your health care provider's office so they can take steps to protect other patients, and put on a mask before you enter the facility.

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild to severe. Most healthy people recover but need to be isolated from others while they are contagious. Severe illness is more likely in older people and people with compromised immunize systems or underlying medical conditions.

If you are sick, stay at home and isolate yourself from other people until you have experienced no symptoms for at least 72 hours, and at least 7 days have passed since symptoms started. Members of your household should also stay home.

For information on COVID-19 including ways you can prepare and help protect the health of yourself and others, go to www.coronavirus.ohio.gov or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634). Information and resources are also available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.coronavirus.gov.

What can I do?

- Keep at least 6 feet away from other people, and stay at home as much as possible.

- Stay home if you are sick. If someone in your household is diagnosed with COVID-19, they should isolate in a separate room. Everyone in the household should quarantine themselves for 14 days.

- Wash your hands often, with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

- Avoid touching your mouth, nose or eyes. Don't share food or drinks.

- Cover coughs and sneezes with your arm or a tissue.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

- Wear a cloth face mask in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, such as grocery stores, pharmacies and parks.

The mission of Wood County Health Department is to prevent disease, promote healthy lifestyles and protect the health of everyone in Wood County. Our Community Health Center provides comprehensive medical services for men, women and children. We welcome all patients, including uninsured or underinsured clients, regardless of their ability to pay, and we accept most third-party insurance. For more information, visit *www.WoodCountyHealth.org*.

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