
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE



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Kent County Health Department to Launch Digital Survey Tool for COVID-19

GRAND RAPIDS - In response to the increasing number of positive COVID-19 cases the Kent County Health Department (KCHD) is implementing a new technology tool to meet the increased demand for investigations.

This digital survey tool will combine with support from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) for follow-up and monitoring of individuals identified as being close contacts to a confirmed case

KCHD has partnered with Michigan software developer CoherentRX to implement a tool called Patient Education Genius (PEG) for collecting information from individuals who test positive for COVID-19 through a digital survey sent via text or e-mail message.

While KCHD has used this tool on a limited basis over the past few weeks, the tool will be utilized on a larger scale in response to the recent increase in cases. KCHD has started using the TraceForce system staffed by volunteers from the MDHHS for monitoring of close contacts identified as being at risk for COVID-19 exposure.

When KCHD receives notification of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, it will issue a text message and/or e-mail to the individual. Individuals aged 18-70 years will receive an electronic message asking them to fill out a confidential survey. They will also be able to locate other information regarding isolation and quarantine and available resources to assist with meeting basic needs. People younger than 18 and older than 70 will receive a phone call from KCHD. If someone does not fill out or complete the digital survey, they will receive a call from a disease investigator to gather the information.

(more)

KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.

700 FULLER AVE. NE, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503



What to Expect if You Test Positive for COVID-19

If you test positive for COVID-19, **STAY HOME!**

A person who tests positive for COVID-19 should not go to school, work, or any public place for at least 10 days from the onset date of their symptoms or from the collection date of their positive test if they do not have symptoms.

A person who has been identified as being COVID-19 positive will receive an investigation survey from KCHD in the form of a text message. The survey collects information on demographics, symptoms, occupation, attendance at public events or gatherings, and people with whom they may have been in close contact.

The survey only asks for information that is allowable under the Public Health Code and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) Privacy Act. The survey does not gather any private information like social security numbers, personal passwords, or banking details. Individuals completing the survey will also receive a follow-up letter from KCHD reinforcing the need to isolate for the 10-day period.

On day 10 of their isolation period, positive individuals will receive a call from KCHD to assess if they can be cleared to return to normal activities. If someone is a household contact with ongoing contact with a positive case, their quarantine will continue for 14 days after the person who tests positive is released from their isolation.

Individuals identified as close contacts to a positive case will be managed by the MDHHS TraceForce system. A member of the MDHHS team will contact these individuals to notify them of exposure within 24 hours of when this information was gathered from the positive case. The MDHHS volunteers will check in daily with close contacts throughout the individual's quarantine period to monitor for symptoms. The close contact should consider getting tested for COVID-19, but a negative test result **does not** reduce the quarantine time since a person can develop symptoms and infect others (even with no symptoms) during this two-week timeframe.

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