

**If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, which include fever of 100.4, cough, severe fatigue and shortness of breath do not go to the ER or JMHS Clinic. Please call the JMHS triage nurse at 320-312-2155. They will evaluate your symptoms and explain your best course of action. Calling ahead not only helps you, it prevents the spread of the coronavirus.**

Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz issued an executive order directing Minnesotans to **Stay Home from March 27 - April 10**. The Stay Home order, along with other mitigation tactics already in place, is being used to help push back the dates at which COVID-19 peaks in Minnesota. Allowing healthcare facilities across the state to be better prepared should an outbreak happen.

The Stay Home order allows people to leave their residence (i.e. shopping for essential services, hiking, walking, etc) but to practice social distancing while out of the home. The order excludes all essential workers, such as Healthcare and public health; Law enforcement, public safety, and first responders; Emergency shelters, congregate living facilities, drop-in centers; Child care; Food and agriculture; News media; Energy; Water and wastewater; and Critical manufacturing.

This week Lac qui Parle County received notice of a confirmed, positive case of Coronavirus (COVID-19). As more information is gathered, the CDC has found an increase of asymptomatic individuals. They are asking that everyone act as if they have the virus and can spread it to others. **Limited testing means the true number of cases may never be known. There may be a significant number of people in communities who have the virus and don't know it.**

We ask that everyone follow the Governor's orders and continue to follow CDC recommendations:

- Stay home period. If you must leave your home for essential items, only one person per family unit should go. When out in the community stay 6 feet apart if possible.
- Stay home if you are sick. Contact your healthcare provider's office to discuss your symptoms if you are concerned. If you develop severe symptoms (chest pain, shortness of breath) seek medical attention by calling the hospital to let them know you are coming.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Practice social distancing. This means DO NOT visit anyone in-person who lives outside your immediate family unit. Phone calls and virtual visits ensure we are doing our part to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

The more we do these things over the next few weeks, the bigger difference it will make in how long this situation will last and how many people will get sick. It's up to each and every one of us to do our part to minimize the threat of community spread.

Following the Governor's Stay Home order will help protect those who are most vulnerable to develop serious complications from COVID-19. These include individuals with:

- Adults 65+
- Heart disease (congestive heart failure, coronary artery disease)

- Lung disease (COPD, emphysema, moderate or severe asthma, chronic bronchitis)
- Diabetes (especially type 1 or poorly controlled diabetes)
- Immunosuppression (chemotherapy, taking certain medications for chronic illnesses such as rheumatoid arthritis, crohn's disease, lupus, or other autoimmune disease, on prednisone long term)

All of us must do our part to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community. So please stay home and avoid any unnecessary travel.