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COVID-19 COMMUNITY LEVEL INCREASES TO MEDIUM IN WINNEBAGO COUNTY

OSHKOSH, Wis. (May 6, 2022) – On Thursday, May 5, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its COVID-19 Community Levels with new local data that puts Winnebago County in the Medium category. The Community Levels are a tool for monitoring COVID-19 and its impact on communities, and the recent uptick in cases in Winnebago County have resulted in an increase in the county's level from low to medium.

CDC COVID-19 Community Levels are based on the total number of new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people, number of new hospital admissions, and average percent of staffed inpatient beds and in the past 7 days. Low, Medium and High Community Levels determine which prevention measures are recommended for individuals and communities. Recommendations for Medium Community Level are as follows:

- If you are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, talk to your health care provider about whether you should wear a mask in public.
- If you live with someone at high risk, or come in contact with people who are high risk, consider wearing a mask while indoors with them or using a home test before coming in contact with them.
- If you have symptoms or were exposed, be sure to get tested and stay home while you're sick/waiting for results.
- Stay up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines.

At all levels, people may choose to wear a mask based on personal preference, informed by personal level of risk or risk to household members. In addition, people with symptoms, a positive test or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask. Healthcare systems, businesses and schools may implement additional prevention strategies regardless of Community Level.

"We have been seeing cases, hospitalizations and percent positivity increase in our area over this past month due to the COVID-19 Omicron subvariants," said Doug Gieryn, Winnebago County Health Department director/health officer. "The medium level does not indicate a crisis level, but it does signal that the risk of infection is increasing in our communities and provides guidance for lowering the risk for yourself and those around you, especially if someone has a high risk for severe disease."

Staying up to date on your COVID-19 vaccines is the best thing you can do, no matter the community level. If you are looking for a COVID-19 vaccine, consider the following opportunities:

- Oshkosh Area Community Pantry, 2551 Jackson Street, Oshkosh
 - Mondays, 2 to 6 p.m.
- Fox Crossing Fire Department, 1326 Cold Spring Road, Neenah
 - Tuesdays, 3 to 5 p.m.
- Walk-In Wednesday, Sunnyview Expo Center, 500 E County Road Y, Oshkosh
 - Wednesdays, 3 to 6 p.m.
- Winnebago County Administration Building, 112 Otter Avenue, Oshkosh
 - Fridays, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Find a complete list of local COVID-19 vaccine clinics at www.wcvaccine.org or call 920-232-3026.

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The Winnebago County Health Department also continues to encourage folks to get tested when they have symptoms of COVID-19 or were exposed to the virus. The testing site at Sunnyview Expo Center operates Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Additional testing locations can be found at winnebagopublichealth.org.

Find COVID-19 data for Winnebago County at wchd.pub/weeklydata and Community Level information at wchd.pub/communitylevelwc. For questions, please call the Winnebago County Health Department's COVID-19 hotline at 920-232-3026 or visit www.winnebagopublichealth.org.

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