

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CDHD CONFIRMS FIRST SARS-CoV-2 VARIANT STRAIN IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT

Late yesterday, the Nebraska Public Health Lab confirmed the first SARS-CoV-2 variant strain. The strain is identified as B.1.429. At this time, over 20 cases of this specific variant have been confirmed in Nebraska. Anderson states, “Since this is a new variant, we don’t know enough about it just yet. The current research tells us that this particular variant is up to 20% more transmissible, but that COVID-19 vaccines appear to be effective against this strain, however the research is ongoing.”

The discovery of this variant strain in the Central District reminds us that the pandemic is not over. Anderson cautions, “While we are all a little weary of hearing the words ‘pandemic’ and ‘COVID-19’, this is clearly not a time to let down our guard. In fact, we need residents to continue to stay home when not feeling well, avoid crowds, wear masks in public and seek a COVID-19 vaccine when it is appropriate.”

CDHD staff and partners have delivered over 18,000 first and/or second doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. “The vaccine supply continues to increase, allowing us to speed up our process and moving us closer to our goal of vaccinating everyone who wants to be vaccinated,” explains Anderson, adding, “Next week, we are expanding clinics to include those age 40 and older. We want to be clear that this would not be possible without strong partners and hundreds of volunteers who help out each week.” CDHD encourages all residents who are seeking either first or second doses of COVID-19 vaccine now and in the future to register at: vaccinate.ne.gov or to call the hotline at 833-998-2275 or 531-249-1873 for assistance in registering. If a person is not able to register in advance, CDHD has volunteers onsite at clinics who can help with registration.

Anderson notes, “We have just passed the one-year anniversary of this pandemic. Our dashboard on our website will be revised as a rolling 52-week dashboard, so that older data will fall off as time progresses.” Anderson also states, “Throughout the past year it has been reinforced to us over and over again how caring, kind, and supportive our district residents have been during this trying time, for that we are truly thankful!”

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