

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 19, 2021**

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CDHD Health Director

**CENTRAL DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

[Grand Island, Neb. – April 19, 2021]

**CDHD REPORTS ON VIRAL ACTIVITY IN THE DISTRICT:**

- **TWO ADDITIONAL COVID-19 RELATED DEATHS**
- **SECOND CASE OF B.1.429 (US/CALIFORNIA) VARIANT**
- **FIRST CASE OF P.1 (JAPAN/BRAZIL) VARIANT**

CDHD reports two additional COVID-19 related deaths, both in their 60's. Both deaths occurred this month. In recent weeks, the average age of new COVID-19 cases is between 38 and 48 years. The total number of COVID-19 related deaths stands at 148. "Each report of a new COVID-19 related death is a solemn reminder that the virus is still active, and that we need to continue to work at protecting ourselves and our neighbors," states Anderson.

Both the B.1.429 and the P.1 variants are classified by the CDC as variants of concern. CDC identifies the attributes of "variants of concern" as *potentially*:

- More difficult to diagnose
- More easily spread
- More likely to result in severe symptoms
- Less likely to be responsive to vaccine

"We are engaged in a race against time to protect our community against these and other emerging variant strains," states Anderson, adding, "We continue to encourage everyone age 16 and older to seek a COVID-19 vaccine. A parent or guardian must accompany those age 16-18. The more people who are fully vaccinated, the less likely the virus is to mutate and continue to spread." Clinics are held each Thursday at the Grand Island Community Field House, 9:00am to 8:00 pm. No appointment is needed. Please pre-register by going to [vaccinate.ne.gov](https://vaccinate.ne.gov) or by calling toll free: (833) 998-2275.

CDHD advises the continued use of masks, physical distancing and staying home when ill as a way to reduce viral activity in the community while more people get vaccinated. More information of COVID-19 variants can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/variant-surveillance/variant-info.html>

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# NEWS RELEASE

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