Allegany COUNTY New York

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

County Office Building,
7 Court Street, Room #30
Belmont, New York 14813
Phone: (585) 268-9250
Fax: (585) 268-9264

Theresa Moore	Jami D'Arcy	Tyler J. Shaw, MHA	Brittney Schuld	David Rahr
Supervising PHE	Deputy PH Director	Public Health Director	Dir. Patient Services	Accountant

To: Allegany County Media
From: Theresa K. Moore, Supervising Public Health Educator/Public Information Officer
Re: **Increase in Number of Positive COVID-19 Cases in Allegany County**
Date: September 2, 2021

News Release: Increase in Number of Positive COVID-19 Cases in Allegany County

There has been a recent increase in the number of positive COVID-19 cases in Allegany County. Allegany County has gone from a substantial (orange) COVID community transmission rate to a high (red) transmission rate. From Wednesday, August 25, 2021, to Tuesday, August 31, 2021, Allegany County reported 58 positive COVID cases or a rate of 125.84 positive cases per 100,000 population. Allegany County Department of Health (ACDOH) Public Health Director Tyler Shaw reports, "The positivity rate not only effects the individual and possibly their families but also has second and third order effects within our communities for schools, businesses, hospitals, and nursing homes."

Many factors are possible causes to the increase in positive cases including larger gatherings throughout the summer, travel outside of our state and area, COVID variants, not enough population vaccinated for COVID-19, reopening of events and festivals, as well as more people returning to this County for vacations, to visit family, work and school, and overall a more relaxed attitude about COVID-19.

Allegany County has only 40.9 percent of our total eligible population fully vaccinated according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as of August 31, 2021. Increasing the number of County residents who are vaccinated will help to lower the COVID community transmission rate and help to combat future variants. For individuals that are vaccinated, there is a decreased risk of being hospitalized. Getting vaccinated protects others in your household and your community. Vaccinations are still available; go to www.vaccinefinder.org, www.vaccinehound.org, or call the Allegany County Department of Health at 585-268-9250 for help finding a vaccine.

According to James Helms, CEO at UR Jones Memorial Hospital, hospitalizations for COVID-19 at Jones have definitely been increasing. "At this point, 26 percent of the current inpatients admitted to our hospital are COVID positive and all but one was unvaccinated," he said. "We are going to double the COVID positive admissions today given the patients we have seen in our emergency room, adding potentially four more. Please help our staff be available to help you by getting vaccinated."

For the nursing staff, providing the care that COVID-19 patients require takes more time than other patients. "Not just because of the level of care, but it also takes time to don and doff the PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) before going into the room to provide that care."

With the upcoming Labor Day weekend, the Allegany County Department of Health **highly recommends** that residents of the County take precautions. When traveling or attending parties or other large social gatherings, remember to wash your hands and use hand sanitizer in addition to wearing a mask, especially when social distancing cannot be maintained. When attending events or gatherings this weekend, choose those that are outside and limit time spent with those that are unvaccinated.

These precautions, in combination with getting vaccinated, are the best way to provide layered protection from COVID-19. You can call the Allegany County Department of Health at 585-268-9250 to register for an upcoming vaccination clinic.

Remember, if you are feeling ill or having any symptoms, a test may be necessary in order to collect close contact information. Please reach out to your primary care provider, check for testing sites by visiting this site: https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you, or contact the Allegany County Department of Health if you do not have a primary care provider.

Get Vaccinated!

###

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.