KITTITAS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH
VIDEO UPDATE
Wednesday, October 28, 2020

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Today's video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9jrpeFI7_0

KCPHD channel:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyQzBwJLbkLj7WueKJ5w7mQ/

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Good afternoon. It's Dr. Larson to talk about COVID-19. Today, I will talk about why people should be tested, and I'll talk about our incident rate.

Why get tested early? It's not so we can end up in isolation because we're positive, but so we can stop the spread of disease and outbreaks from happening.

I'm going to draw something out that has to do with two or three counties.

[See board.]

Patient X had some mild symptoms. They just thought they had a cold and didn't get tested. That person went to church and infected a physician who was in the choir. That physician infected his/her two children, and one staff person. These people are all now it isolation, and the children can't go to school -- all because Patient X didn't get tested.

Patient X also went to an event in a different county, still thinking they just had a cold. Eight people from that event later tested positive.

Patient X also infected three others who ended up hospitalized (although no deaths).

This is all because Patient X didn't get tested. When they did get tested, they stayed at home, but now their spouse is positive. The spouse infected three other people through some small group gatherings they had attended.

And again, all this is because Patient X hadn't been tested. If they had been, there would have been one person positive instead of 40 people.

This is why we want people to be tested. We don't want people getting sick, being hospitalized, and missing school.

It's difficult as we head into influenza and cold season because you don't necessarily know what you have. If you have an upper respiratory illness of some kind, a cough, fever, muscle aches and pains, or loss of taste and smell, you should be tested at the COVID-19 Clinic at KVH. Your health insurance will cover that test with no co-pay or effect on your deductible.

If you wonder if it's a cold or strep throat, be tested for COVID-19. If the test is negative, you can follow up with your primary care provider. Patient X didn't do anything wrong -- they just didn't get tested.

The other thing I want to talk about is our incident rate. To determine the incident rate, we look at the number of positive cases per 100,000 people for 14 days. Public Health's recommendations is that if we're under 75 cases in the incident rate, we can have in-person school. The lower the number, the less likely someone transmitting disease in the school.

This number is difficult for us to get to here in Kittitas County because of the college. They are working really hard, but right now our number is greater than 300. Because our county has a population of about 50,000, this number means that in the 14 day time period, we have about 150 cases.

With 150 cases, it's more likely you will run into someone with COVID-19. We want to bring that number down.

In a hybrid model with the schools, the 75 is not a hard-and-fast number because we know that half of the 150 is related to students at CWU. We're not seeing bleeding of those cases into the community. The students at CWU are infecting roommates, not people in the community.

But half that number *is* us. We need to be wearing masks and maintaining social distancing. Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas should be different events this year because we really don't want to spread this disease to the community, and we want to keep schools open

My ask is that you make your Halloween different and safe so that next year we can get back to normal for Halloween.

That's it for today! Thanks a lot. Bye.

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