

Department of Health Holds First Regional Contact Tracing Meeting in Southwestern Pennsylvania

Harrisburg, PA - The Department of Health, along with a number of outside organizations, brought together stakeholders last week at the first southwest contact tracing consortium to discuss the contact tracing needs in southwestern Pennsylvania.

“Contact tracing is an essential function of public health as we work to identify those who may have come into contact with cases of COVID-19,” Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine said. “This meeting with the southwestern regional consortium is the first of many meetings with regions across the state to provide information about our plans and our needs to conduct contact tracing. I am encouraged by the partners who are taking part in these efforts and look forward to the work that will be done in the southwest region to support contact tracing in Pennsylvania.”

In the southwest region, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation helped quickly to mobilize the initial membership of the regional consortium and the department will continue to seek partners for the consortium. The initial attendees were:

- **Community Business Organizations:** 1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health; Center for Community Resources, Inc.; Fayette County Community Action; Indiana County Community Action Program; United Way of Southwestern PA; YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh;
- **Federally Qualified Health Centers:** Centerville Clinics, Inc.; East Liberty Family Health Care Center; Primary Health Network; Southwestern Pennsylvania Human Services;
- **Foundations:** Jewish Healthcare Foundation; Hillman Family Foundations; Staunton Farm Foundation;
- **Health Systems:** Allegheny Health Network; Healthcare Council of Western Pennsylvania; Vale-U Health (Monongahela Valley Hospital);
- **Human Services Counties:** Armstrong/Indiana Behavioral & Developmental Health Program; Beaver County Behavioral Health; Bedford-Somerset Developmental and Behavioral Health Services; Butler County; Indiana County Department of Human Services;
- **Public Health:** Allegheny County; Pennsylvania Department of Health
- **Regional Employers and Workforce Development:** Allegheny Conference on Community Development; Partner4Work; Pittsburgh Business Group on Health;
- **Universities and College:** Community College of Allegheny County; Community College of Beaver County; Duquesne University; Robert Morris University; University of Pittsburgh (Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Social Work and Public Health); Westmoreland County Community College.

The meeting of the southwest consortium is the first regional meeting, and the department is working to set up consortiums in each of the six regions in the state.

Consortiums will work to assess the number of contact tracers needed in each area, help recruit contact tracers and ensure training and education is available, and coordinate information and data to ensure consistency within the region. The consortiums will create a sustainable infrastructure that will support the growth of coordinated contact tracing efforts in each region, and will hopefully establish partnerships that could assist in other public health priorities moving

forward. A regional approach grows existing community infrastructure and incorporates local knowledge, experience and connections.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health today confirmed as of 12:00 a.m., June 2, that there are 612 additional positive cases of COVID-19, bringing the statewide total to 72,894. All 67 counties in Pennsylvania have cases of COVID-19.

There are 5,667 total deaths attributed to COVID-19, an increase of 100 new deaths.

There are 616 patients who have a positive serology test and either COVID-19 symptoms or a high-risk exposure, which are considered probable cases and not confirmed cases. There are 399,361 patients who have tested negative to date. Of the patients who have tested positive to date the age breakdown is as follows:

- Nearly 1% are ages 0-4;
- Nearly 1% are ages 5-12;
- Nearly 2% are ages 13-18;
- 6% are ages 19-24;
- Nearly 37% are ages 25-49;
- 25% are ages 50-64; and
- 28% are ages 65 or older.

Most of the patients hospitalized are ages 65 or older, and most of the deaths have occurred in patients 65 or older.

In nursing and personal care homes, there are 15,660 resident cases of COVID-19, and 2,696 cases among employees, for a total of 18,356 at 609 distinct facilities in 44 counties. Out of our total deaths, 3,597 have occurred in residents from nursing or personal care facilities.

Approximately 5,523 of our total cases are in health care workers.

For the latest information for individuals, families, businesses and schools, visit “Responding to COVID-19” on [pa.gov](https://www.pa.gov).

Non-life-sustaining businesses in the red phase are ordered to be closed and schools are closed statewide through the remainder of the academic year. Currently, 57 counties are in the yellow or green phase of reopening. The first 18 counties moved to green on Friday. All remaining red counties are expected to move to yellow by June 5.

The Wolf Administration stresses the role Pennsylvanians play in helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cover any coughs or sneezes with your elbow, not your hands.
- Clean surfaces frequently.
- Stay home to avoid spreading COVID-19, especially if you are unwell.
- If you must go out for a life-sustaining reason, please wear a mask.

All Pennsylvania residents are encouraged to sign up for AlertPA, a text notification system for health, weather, and other important alerts like COVID-19 updates from commonwealth agencies. Residents can sign up online at www.ready.pa.gov/BeInformed/Signup-For-Alerts