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PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

For Immediate Release

April 26, 2021

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department COVID-19 Update

Today there were five new cases of COVID-19 reported in Benzie County and two new cases of COVID-19 reported in Leelanau County. The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department has reported 17 new cases – 11 new cases in Benzie County and 6 new cases in Leelanau County - of COVID-19 since Friday, April 23rd. Saturday, April 24, 9 new cases were reported: Benzie–5, and Leelanau–4. Sunday, April 25, 1 new case was reported: Benzie–1.

Last week, our school-based COVID-19 vaccine clinics administered over 700 COVID-19 vaccinations in Suttons Bay, Frankfort, Maple City/Glen Lake, and Benzonia. Almost 150 of those vaccinated were students from 11 different school districts. On Friday, we also administered our 15,000th dose to Josephine Gorman, a 16-year-old student from St. Francis High School in Traverse City who came to our Maple City/Glen Lake clinic with her mother Jennifer.

Dr. Meyerson noted the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) lifted the pause in the use of the Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine on Friday and recommended a warning label be added to the vaccine packaging noting the very rare blood clotting disorder risk. The Janssen vaccine was paused for 10 days after 15 blood clotting disorder cases were reported in females aged 18-59 among the almost 8 million Janssen vaccines administered. The decision to lift the pause is based on the experts' determination that the benefits of again administering the vaccine greatly outweigh the very small degree of risk associated with its use, particularly now that the risk and treatment protocols are better understood.

The Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department will soon resume offering Janssen at some of its pop-up clinics. "Based on these scientific results that the vaccine is safe and effective, we will be administering the Janssen vaccine, along with Pfizer and Moderna, at our clinics," Dr. Meyerson said, noting "the risk is extremely rare - two per million- and the risk of mortality and severe illness from COVID infection is far greater," he said. "At some of our clinics, people will have a choice of Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine and its convenience as a 'one and done' dosage, but we'll also have another vaccine so they can decide what is best for them."

The health department is starting to allow residents to self-schedule their first and second dose appointments for the COVID-19 vaccine at clinics throughout Benzie and Leelanau counties. If you need a second dose, please locate a clinic with the vaccine that matches the manufacturer of your first dose and is on or after your 2nd dose due date. All clinics currently scheduled for April and early May are listed on the health department's website, www.bldhd.org. The Moderna vaccine is the primary vaccine we will be using and is available for anyone 18 or older. Anyone needing assistance to make an appointment should call 2-1-1 or their local Senior Services Center. Walk-in appointments may be available, and residents can look for signage indicating walk-ins are welcome the day of a clinic.

As of 4:00 p.m. today, the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is reporting:

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 1,163, Leelanau– 1,197
- Active COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 190, Leelanau– 202
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 942, Leelanau– 979
- Confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Benzie – 31, Leelanau– 16
- Hospitalized: 147 total; 4 currently

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