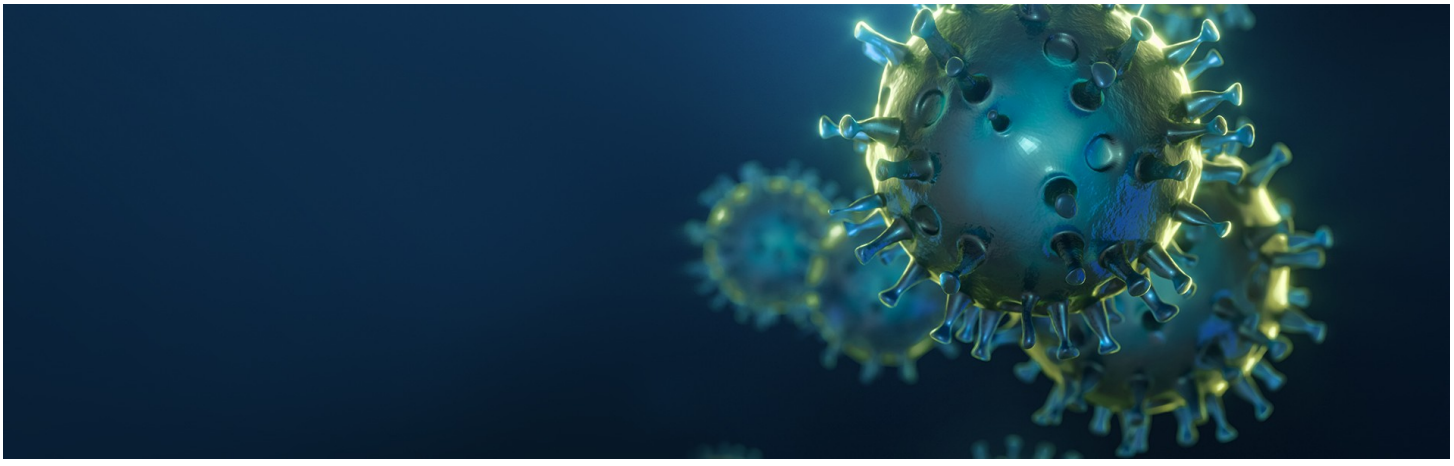
# COVID-19 Update: 5,060 Hospitalizations, New Indoor Air Quality Program

*November 30, 2020*



(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine today provided the following updates on Ohio's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**HOSPITALIZATIONS & ICU ADMISSIONS**

Ohio's COVID-19 hospitalizations have hit an all-time high at 5,060 people hospitalized with the coronavirus across Ohio as compared to just under 1,700 COVID-19 patients on November 1. Of Ohio's currently hospitalized COVID-19 patients, there are 1,180 individuals in intensive care units and 682 people are on ventilators.

According to Dr. Andy Thomas, Chief Clinical Officer at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, one-third of ICU patients across Ohio have COVID and one-third of individuals on ventilators have COVID.

"COVID patients are going to start crowding out other people who need that level of care as these numbers continue to rise," said Dr. Thomas. "The reality is that hospitals are making difficult decisions about delaying care. It may be non-urgent care, but it's care that may cause someone to go to the ICU after surgery. A lot of hospitals are delaying those surgeries because they can't afford their ICUs to be overtaxed."

Dr. Thomas reported that rural areas are being hit particularly hard right now, and several hospitals are beginning to voice concerns about their ability to manage such a high number of intensive care patients. As the total number of COVID patients grows, smaller community hospitals will be unable to expand their intensive care capacity.

For individuals who traveled over Thanksgiving, Dr. Thomas urged them to quarantine upon return to Ohio to break any possible chain of transmission.

**COVID-19 INDOOR AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

Governor DeWine today announced a new program to help improve indoor air quality and reduce the transmission of COVID-19 at senior living facilities, including nursing homes, assisted living centers, and adult day centers.

The $28 million program was created using federal CARES Act funding to address indoor air quality through HVAC inspections, portable air filtration systems, new filtration systems, maintenance on current systems, and other interventions. Eligible recipients can receive up to $15,000.

“As we move into colder months and spend more time inside, proper ventilation and filtration are even more important to stop the spread of COVID-19,” said Governor DeWine.

The program was approved by the Bureau of Workers’ Compensation (BWC) Board of Directors at a special meeting Wednesday. BWC will administer the program and applications are available at bwc.ohio.gov. Additional questions about the program should be emailed to grants@bwc.state.oh.us.

**STATE OF OHIO EMPLOYEES**

Due to the recent spike in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in Ohio, Governor DeWine has delayed Ohio's plan to resume in-person work at state-owned facilities. A gradual, phased approach was expected to begin in January. Governor DeWine also encouraged other employers to allow employees to work at home to the extent possible.

**ADDITIONAL GUESTS**

During today's briefing, Governor DeWine was joined by four nurses who discussed their experiences treating patients with coronavirus.

Stacey Morris, a COVID unit nurse manager at Cleveland Clinic Akron General, discussed the role nurses play when patients are admitted, as they fight for their lives, and, in the worst circumstances, when they must say goodbye to their loved ones.

Carrie Watkins, assistant director for nursing at Genacross Lutheran Services in Holland, Ohio, discussed the surge in COVID cases that are experienced in nursing homes each time there is a surge in community spread.

Dara Pence, ICU nurse manager at Ohio Health's Riverside Hospital in Columbus, discussed the unpredictability of the virus and the tragedies that she has witnessed due to COVID-19.

Jamie Giere, a nurse and team leader for the COVID unit at Premier Health's Upper Valley Medical Center in Troy, Ohio, discussed the surge in patients over the past three weeks and her concerns that the public does not fully understand what is happening in Ohio's hospitals.

**NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH**

On this final day of National Adoption Month, Governor DeWine encouraged Ohioans to consider fostering or adopting a child. In Ohio, there are 3,000 children waiting for a family, including 11-year-old Alex, who is featured in the video below.

**CURRENT CASE DATA**

In total, there are 421,063 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 reported in Ohio and 6,429 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 26,864 people have been hospitalized throughout the pandemic, including 4,682 admissions to intensive care units. In-depth data can be accessed by visiting coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Video of today's full update, including versions with foreign language translation, can be viewed on the Ohio Channel's YouTube page.

For more information on Ohio's response to COVID-19, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH.