New Positive Cases Begin to Level Off; DPH Confirms First COVID-19 Case with South African Variant

DOVER (March 5, 2021) – The Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) is providing an update on the most recent statistics related to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Delaware, as of 6 p.m. Thursday, March 4, 2021.

A total of 87,874 positive cases of COVID-19 among Delaware residents have been reported to DPH since March 11, 2020. The seven-day average of new positive cases decreased to 256.7 as of Thursday, March 4.

The seven-day average for the percentage of persons who tested positive for COVID-19 as of Thursday, March 4, was 19.2%, a decrease from 20.9% as of Thursday, Feb. 25. DPH publishes both positivity rates – persons tested and total tests conducted – on its COVID-19 data portal. As of Tuesday, March 2, the seven-day average for the percentage of total tests that were positive was 4.6%, a decrease from 5.1% as of Tuesday, Feb. 23. There is a two-day lag for presenting data related to percent of tests that are positive to account for the time delay between the date of the test and the date that DPH receives the test result.

In addition, 127 individuals are currently hospitalized due to COVID-19 in Delaware, which is a decrease of 29 as of this time last week. Fifteen of the hospitalized persons are critically ill, down 11 from last week.

A total of 1,453 Delawareans have passed away due to complications from COVID-19. The state reported 35 additional deaths since last week's update. The total number of individuals who have died from COVID-19 ranges in age from younger than 5 to 104 years old. Of those who have died, 718 were female and 735 were male. A total of 715 individuals were from New Castle County, 302 were from Kent County, and 436 were from Sussex County.

Update on Variant Cases in Delaware:
The Division of Public Health (DPH) announced today the first confirmed case of the COVID-19 variant, SARS-CoV-2 B.1.351, in Delaware. This variant is the same one that was first discovered in South Africa in October and is also commonly referred to as the South African Variant. Delaware now joins a list of 17 other states and jurisdictions reporting cases of the SA variant.

The case involved a New Castle County adult in their 50s who traveled outside of the country prior to testing positive for COVID-19. The case was identified through routine surveillance of test specimens performed by the Division of Public Health Laboratory.

In addition to the newly identified South African variant case, DPH has identified 12 confirmed cases of the COVID-19 variant, SARS-CoV-2 B.1.1.7, in Delaware through routine surveillance of test specimens. This variant is the same one that was first discovered in England in December and is also commonly referred to as the UK Variant. The cases include 11 adults ranging in age from 18-65, as well as a child under the age of 10. Eight individuals were from New Castle County and four were from Kent County.

Virus mutation is common. Preliminary data suggests the UK variant, as well as Brazilian and South African variants, may spread more easily and quickly, which could lead to increased cases. Public health approach and treatments are not any different, but as these new variants may be more contagious, it is even more important that individuals remain vigilant and continue taking the necessary steps to avoid spreading the virus – wear a mask, wash your hands, avoid gatherings.

COVID-19 Vaccinations:

As of 12 a.m. March 5, a total of 253,535 administered doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been reported to the state's immunization information system, DelVAX. A total of 278,390 doses have been delivered to the state, and 52,115 doses have been delivered as part of the federal pharmacy programs. Delaware's latest COVID-19 vaccination statistics can be found under the Vaccine Tracker dashboard at de.gov/healthycommunity.

Long-term Care Statistics:

As of 6 p.m. Thursday, March 4, there have been a total of 2,434 positive COVID-19 cases involving long-term care residents, and 700 residents of Delaware long-term care facilities have died from complications related to COVID-19.

The locations and number of deaths involving residents of long-term care facilities are:

Atlantic Shores Rehabilitation and Health Center, Millsboro (23)
Brackenville Center, Genesis Healthcare, Hockessin (23)
Brandywine Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Wilmington (36)
Brandywine Living at Seaside Pointe, Rehoboth Beach (5)
Brookdale Dover, Dover (15)
Cadia Healthcare Broadmeadow, Middletown (17)
Cadia Healthcare Capitol, Dover (21)
Cadia Healthcare Renaissance, Millsboro (11)
Cadia Healthcare North Wilmington/Silverside, Wilmington (33)
Cadia Healthcare Pike Creek, Pike Creek (2)
Churchman Village, Newark (21)
Country Rest Home, Greenwood (16)
Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill, Smyrna (15)
Delmar Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Delmar (2)
Dover Place, Dover (6)
Foulk Manor South, Wilmington (14)
Forwood Manor, Wilmington (6)
Governor Bacon Health Center, Delaware City (1)
HarborChase of Wilmington, Wilmington (4)
Harbor Healthcare and Rehabilitation, Lewes (45)
Harrison House Senior Living, Georgetown (47)
Hillside Center, Wilmington (8)
Ingleside Assisted Living, Wilmington (2)
Kentmere Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center, Wilmington (9)
Kutz Senior Living, Wilmington (9)
Little Sisters of the Poor, Newark (11)
Lofland Park Center, Genesis Healthcare, Seaford (6)
ManorCare Health Services, Wilmington (20)
ManorCare Health Services, Pike Creek (27)
Methodist Country House, Wilmington (4)
Millcroft, Newark (3)
Milford Center, Genesis Healthcare, Milford (48)
New Castle Health and Rehabilitation Center, New Castle (12)
Newark Manor Nursing Home, Newark (11)

Parkview Nursing and Rehabilitation, Wilmington (26)
Pinnacle Rehabilitation and Health Center, Smyrna (37)
Regal Heights Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center, Hockessin (14)
Regency Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center, Wilmington (9)
Seaford Center, Genesis Healthcare, Seaford (3)
Shipley Manor, Wilmington (12)
Silver Lake Center, Genesis Healthcare, Dover (2)
Somerford House and Place, Newark (5)
Summit Assisted Living, Hockessin (3)
Sunrise Assisted Living, Wilmington (2)
The Center at Eden Hill, Dover (7)
The Moorings at Lewes, Lewes (4)
Westminster Village, Dover (23)
WillowBrooke Court Skilled Center at Manor House, Seaford (12)
WillowBrooke Court at Cokesbury Village, Hockessin (4)
Three other New Castle County long-term care facilities (1 death at each facility)
One other Kent County long-term care facility (1 death at this facility)

If you are sick with any of the following symptoms, stay home: fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, muscle aches, fatigue, chills, shaking with chills, loss of smell or taste, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or headache or congestion or runny nose without a known cause such as allergies. Other symptoms such as abdominal pain or lack of appetite have been identified as potential symptoms related to COVID-19 and may prompt further screening, action or investigation by a primary care provider. If you are sick and need essential supplies, ask someone else to go to the grocery store or the pharmacy to get what you need.

DPH reminds Delawareans that if you believe you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, or have symptoms of illness, make sure to distance yourself from others, particularly vulnerable populations. Older adults and people of any age with serious underlying medical conditions – including serious heart conditions, chronic lung conditions, including moderate to severe asthma, severe obesity and those who are immunocompromised, including through cancer treatment – may have a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Information about testing events, including community testing sites, permanent fixed testing sites, and free-standing sites operated by the health care systems and hospitals, will be listed on the testing section of the Delaware coronavirus website at de.gov/gettested.

Delawareans 18 or older are encouraged to download COVID Alert DE, Delaware's free exposure notification app to help protect your neighbors while ensuring your privacy. Download on the App Store or Google Play.

Individuals with general questions about COVID-19 should call Delaware 2-1-1, individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can text their ZIP code to 898-211, or email delaware211@uwde.org. Hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Friday; 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Medically related questions regarding testing, symptoms, and health-related guidance can be submitted by email at DPHCall@delaware.gov.

Individuals who have complaints about individuals violating public gathering restrictions should contact state or local law enforcement. Concerns that a business may be violating operating restrictions should be directed to: HSPContact@delaware.gov. Questions related to business re-openings or operations as businesses re-open should go to COVID19FAQ@delaware.gov. Questions regarding unemployment claims should be emailed to: UIClaims@delaware.gov.

As a reminder, DPH recently announced it has created a pathway for the public to submit complaints if they believe a COVID-19 vaccination provider is violating vaccination requirements. Those complaints can be directed to HSPContact@delaware.gov.

DPH will continue to update the public as more information becomes available. For the latest on Delaware's response, go to de.gov/coronavirus.