

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 25, 2020**

**For More Information, Contact:**

Robert Parker, public information officer, Western Region, [robert.parker@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:robert.parker@vdh.virginia.gov) or Breanne Forbes Hubbard, population health manager, [Breanne.forbes-hubbard@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Breanne.forbes-hubbard@vdh.virginia.gov), 276-759-8297

## **Mount Rogers Health District Announces Community Transmission of COVID-19 in Galax**

(MARION, Virginia) – Mount Rogers Health District announces community transmission of COVID-19 in Galax and the surrounding community. The district previously announced community transmission for the district as a whole, based on case activity across the eight localities, and now there is evidence of community transmission specifically in Galax.

“Community transmission indicates that you can get COVID-19 from anywhere within the community; you don’t have to travel or know a person with the disease in order to get it. This means everyone should stay home and only go out for essential needs as rarely as possible,” insists Karen Shelton MD, Director, Mount Rogers Health District. “Southwest Virginia is not immune to COVID-19. If you have to go out for critical things like grocery shopping or medical care, wear a cloth face covering and stay at least six feet away from others. Wash your hands and clean surfaces often. These personal precautions apply to all of us – stay home!”

The CDC recommends everyone wear cloth face coverings when out in public in conditions that make social distancing difficult. There is growing evidence that people can spread COVID-19 even if they never develop symptoms or before their symptoms start. Even so, the CDC believes that people are most contagious when they have symptoms. Everyone should limit their exposure by staying home.

Older adults, especially those 65 and older, and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more severe complications from COVID-19. Even if you do not fit those criteria, you help reduce the risk for those who are most vulnerable.

Most people with COVID-19 develop mild illness and can isolate at home. The most common symptoms are fever, cough and shortness of breath. Other common symptoms include fatigue, decreased appetite and muscle or body aches. Not everyone with COVID-19 will have all symptoms, and a fever might not be present. If you feel your symptoms are worsening, please seek medical care by calling your primary care provider, urgent care, or 911.

Do your part to STOP the spread by taking everyday precautions, including staying at home as much as possible, avoiding close contact with others, covering your coughs and sneezes, and cleaning and disinfecting surfaces.

Individuals, communities, businesses and healthcare organizations all play an important role in slowing the spread of COVID-19.

For the most up to date information on COVID-19 in Virginia, visit <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus>.

# # #