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Press Release

For Release: Immediately

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Health Department Administering COVID-19 Booster Doses to Ages 16 and 17

Ten Additional Ventilators Acquired to Assist Hutchinson Hospital

Reno County, Kan.- December 13, 2021- The Reno County Health Department has begun administering COVID-19 booster doses to ages 16 and 17, effective Monday, December 13. This comes after the CDC and FDA cleared the younger age group last week.

Booster doses are recommended for all individuals aged 16 and older who have completed a 2-dose primary series of Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine at least six months prior, or a Johnson and Johnson vaccine at least two months prior. At this time, only the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is authorized for adolescents aged 16 and 17. Boosters increase the antibody response, helping to protect from serious illness, even as the virus mutates.

Active COVID-19 cases in Reno County are currently at 629 and the positive test rate is back up over 20%. There has not yet been a confirmed case of the Omicron variant in Kansas. Preventative measures include getting vaccinated, wearing a mask, sanitizing hands frequently, socially distancing, staying home if feeling ill, and getting tested if exposed to COVID-19 or are experiencing symptoms.

Reno County Emergency Management assisted Hutchinson Regional Medical Center in acquiring ten additional ventilator units from the state on Friday. There has been an increased need due to the severity of symptoms patients are experiencing.

The Reno County Health Department is administering vaccines during their normal operating hours. Walk-ins are accepted for those age 12 and over, but appointments are recommended. Appointments are required for children aged 5-11. Call 620-694-2900 and select option 6 for scheduling. The vaccine is free to any Reno County resident, regardless of citizen status or insurance. Flu shots can also be administered at the same time as a COVID vaccine.

The Health Department is open Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 7:30am to noon, and 1 to 6pm, and Wednesday from 9am to noon and 1 to 6pm. To view vaccine availability at other sites, visit www.vaccines.gov. For a ride to one of the vaccine sites, call RCAT at 620-694-2913. To view the Reno County COVID-19 dashboard, visit www.renogov.org and click on the dashboard link in the spotlight section.

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