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City-Cowley County
Health Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 4, 2022

County Wide COVID-19 Update

The health department monitors the health of county residents. The following is an update to inform the community of the current status of the COVID-19 pandemic in Cowley County.

Respiratory infections in Cowley County are widespread and continue to effect local residents. This overall condition is expected to slowly improve over the next 4-6 weeks. All residents are encouraged to take all available precautions to avoid the contraction and spread of illness.

LOCAL SCHOOLS:

Local schools have been impacted by inclement weather this week. Illness is expected to continue to affect attendance centers through the next several weeks. Students that are showing symptoms of illness should closely follow their school district policies for any illness. Contact the school RN if you have questions about COVID testing for local students.

In the coming weeks the Health Department will reach out to the local districts that may wish to amend their gating (attendance) plans. We will work with them to tailor plans that will shorten time away from school so long as testing to stay and learn methodologies are used. We will protect people who take ill from being rushed back to work or school as long as they are ill. The PHO continually reviews illness data from our community and will propose any changes as needed. As of this date Cowley County is maintaining the 10-day isolation protocol for people who test positive for SARS-CoV2.

COVID-19 TESTING:

During the past week testing requests have dropped in the requests for testing county wide. We hope this pattern continues to persist.

The Health Department is still providing testing and we have established new relationships with laboratories to have results returned rapidly. If you begin to feel ill you are advised to test to learn if you may have COVID in order to help stop the spread of illness. If you develop symptoms and need a test please contact the Winfield Office and staff will help you, detail the process, and get you scheduled.

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COWLEY COUNTY ILLNESS REPORT BY THE NUMBERS:

The positivity rate for the last seven days has declined to 10.89%. Testing volumes continue to slow and are currently averaging 50 people per day in the county. That is about half of where we were 10 days ago. A level of 50 tests per day is considered nearly normal for the pandemic, we are not certain if the winter weather suppressed these numbers this week and will watch closely as more pleasant weather returns to the area in the coming days.

Since the start of the pandemic, nearly 9,850 COVID cases have been confirmed in Cowley County. Four thousand one hundred fifty-nine (4,159) of those cases occurred during 2021 (as of December 30th). January 2022 is now recognized for the highest single month infection rate and total of new cases, 2,552. Overall, one hundred forty-five (145) Cowley County residents have died from complications related to COVID-19 since March of 2020.

Month to month new case information is presented numerically in the tables below:

Month/Year	New Cases
January 2021	828
February 2021	304
March 2021	90
April 2021	47
May 2021	59
June 2021	28
July 2021	153
August 2021	488
September 2021	592
October 2021	386
November 2021	606
December 2021*	653
TOTAL	4159

Month/Year	January 2021	January 2022	February 2022
New Cases	828	2552	129*

Year Total	2021	2022
Total Cases	4159	2681
% of cases	100%	64%

This chart compares the previous year, 2021 with the current year to date.

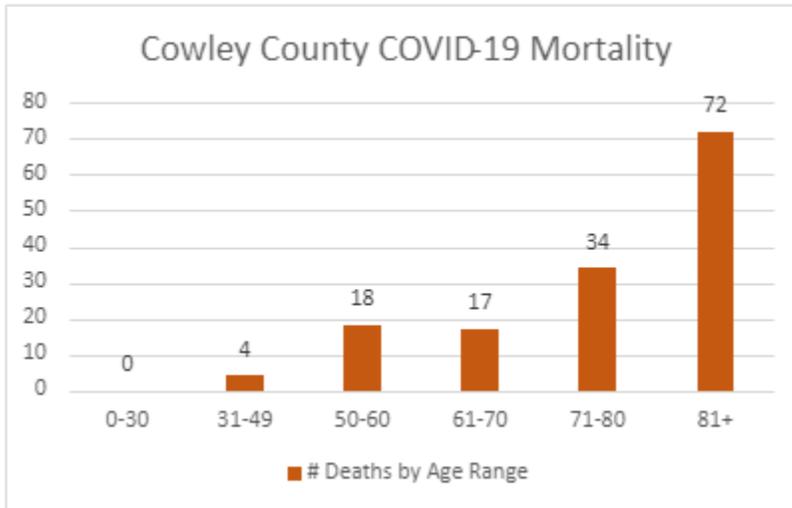
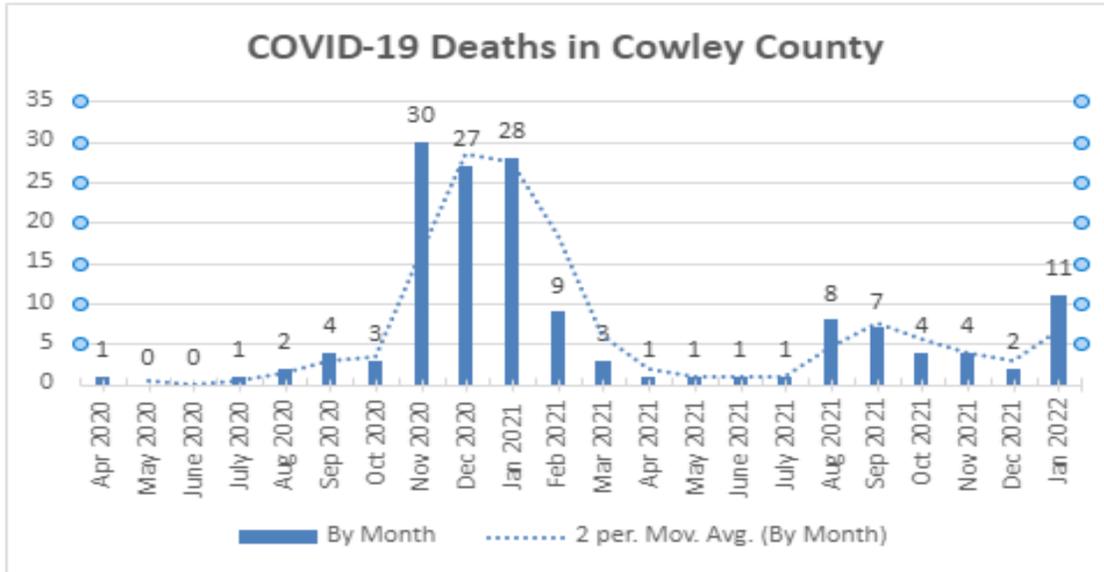
No additional deaths were recorded this week connected to COVID infection in Cowley County. Our total mortality figure remains at 145 since the start of the pandemic.

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Cowley County remains identified as an area where infection remains widespread. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment has updated their reporting of the ongoing pandemic for the state and individual counties including weekly county rankings. You can visit their website for more data: <https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/160/COVID-19-in-Kansas> .

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PERSONAL CARE AND ILLNESS PREVENTION:

Remember your individual health status is vital in combating illness of all kinds.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle includes eating nutritious foods, maintaining a healthy body weight, staying physically active, drinking plenty of water and getting adequate rest.

If you and your doctor believe the use of vitamins and supplements can aid in keeping you healthy please use them.

At this point in time, we have gone over and over the steps people should take to prevent the contraction and spread of a respiratory virus. Please take those precautions to protect yourself and your loved ones.

If you do become ill, please do not participate in any group events until after you have fully recovered from your illness. For as long as the pandemic persists Cowley County residents are advised to take all necessary precautions to prevent the contraction and spread of ANY illness.

- Stay home if you feel ill.
- If you develop symptoms of illness, be tested to determine if you are infected.
- Wash your hands frequently and use hand sanitizer.
- Clean high touch surfaces with disinfecting cleaners (doors, counters etc.).
- Wear a mask that properly covers your nose and mouth in public.
- Avoid crowds and large social gatherings.
- When ill you **MUST** stay home and isolate from others so you will not spread the virus or any other illness.
- Please be kind and respectful of others.

A final note for today. The County Public Health Officer does not and cannot approve any medical remedies for the treatment of COVID-19. Many people have reached out to me wanting my intervention or approval to use prescription drugs such as Ivermectin or Hydroxychloroquine for the treatment of COVID-19. I do not control the actions of the Food and Drug Administration. I firmly believe that all personal health decisions should occur between a patient and their physician. I am empathetic to desires of people that would like to have all options available to them. I also respect pharmacists and physicians that must follow their professional directives rather than risk their licenses to practice or operate.

The next health update will be published Friday, February 11, 2022

Stay well.