COVID CASPER Study to be Conducted in Crow Wing County 9/24-9/26

Crow Wing County will have a team from Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) in the area Thursday, September 24 through Saturday, September 26 collecting data for the COVID CASPER study. There will be 4 small areas in Crow Wing County targeted: two in Brainerd, one in Crosslake, and one in Nisswa.

The team will be doing interviews and taking blood and nasal swap samples. This information will tell MDH more about the COVID virus spread in Crow Wing County. Participation is voluntary. Team members are public health workers. Survey teams will be wearing masks when first knocking on the door as well as vests with nametags that identify them as members of an MDH CASPER team. Their vehicles will have magnets on the side that say, "COVID-19 Survey Team." For more information: https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/casper.html

The voluntary, in-person survey is to help the MDH to understand the effect COVID-19 is having on Minnesota communities. The survey is called a modified Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response, or CASPER survey. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed CASPER as an evidence-based tool to assess community needs. They have been used before to collect household information during public health emergencies such as hurricanes, oil spills, and the Zika virus outbreak. Several other states are also conducting COVID-19 CASPERs.

Information learned from the survey will help public health workers, and others who are part of the COVID-19 response, make decisions that best meet the needs of each community affected by COVID-19. Through the CASPER survey, MDH hope to:

- Understand how COVID-19 has spread in Minnesota communities.
- Understand what caused COVID-19 to spread in certain areas.
- Explore how COVID-19 transmission and infection rates differ among regions in Minnesota.
- Identify the percentage of people infected with COVID-19 that have no symptoms.
- Improve health messaging and help stop COVID-19 spread

The survey is funded through COVID-19 Relief Funds approved by the Minnesota legislature to conduct this survey and other studies.

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