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NEWS RELEASE
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Heart to Heart International July testing event in Lawrence reveals 14 positive cases out of 1,081 total tests

LAWRENCE – During a free, mass-testing event for COVID-19 in Lawrence from July 8-10 by Lenexa-based Heart to Heart International (HHI), 12 Douglas County residents and two others from area counties tested positive out of 1,081 tests administered.

The drive-up testing by HHI occurred at three sites in Lawrence, and it was open to anyone seeking a test mostly via pre-registration though the nonprofit accommodated some walk-ups with testing. The program generally offers tests in communities for essential workers who don't have options to work from home and might have chances for increased contact with members of the public.

According to HHI, 80.6% of the people tested in Douglas County during the event were asymptomatic, and 19.4% reported they were symptomatic.

“We are glad to see around a 1% positivity rate from the mass testing event in Douglas County in early July, particularly because that was during a time when we were seeing our highest rolling seven-day average of about 26 new cases per day and when we instituted public health orders requiring masks and closing bars and nightclubs in the community,” said Sonia Jordan, Director of Informatics at Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health. “We are grateful to Heart to Heart for sharing these results that gave us a picture of what was occurring in our community at that time and working with us as we seek to continue to convert information into actionable and effective decisions during the pandemic.”

Jordan said it's important for everyone to continue to be vigilant about safe public health habits, including practicing proper social distancing, wearing a mask in public, washing your hands frequently and staying home when you feel sick. The results from the testing event represent one point in time during the pandemic, and it's important for people not to get a false sense of security and be lax on public health practices, she said.

Currently, any Douglas County residents who believes they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and do not have a primary care provider can call the Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health Coronavirus hotline, 785-856-4343. We have nurses online to provide initial screening and if needed, directions on how to get tested.

Heart to Heart International, in collaboration with Dr. Kevin Sykes at the University of Kansas Medical Center through funding from the National Foundation for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has been providing COVID-19 testing for essential workers in the Kansas City metro area.

“The objective from the outset was to provide public health institutions and policy makers with timely COVID-19 positivity rates to assist with measuring community spread and making policy decisions to combat the virus,” said Dan Neal, VP of Operations for Heart to Heart International. “We are pleased that our testing efforts in Douglas County, Kansas, has provided supplemental data to the county, resulting in actionable decisions benefiting the community.”

HHI has performed nearly 3,000 tests throughout the KC-metro area and continues to partner with community groups, public health institutions, schools and businesses by offering free testing services. Interested parties can contact Amanda.otto@hearttoheartinternational.org for additional information.

Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health maintains the Coronavirus hotline, 785-856-4343, and there are [options in the community for COVID-19 screening and testing](#). Always call a healthcare provider to let them know of your symptoms before showing up.

Members of the public can also check douglascountyks.org/coronavirus or ldchealth.org/coronavirus for information about COVID-19 in Douglas County.

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