



NEWS RELEASE . FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Spike in positive COVID-19 cases attributed to long-term care facilities**

(Oklahoma City) - Today's increase in positive COVID-19 cases in Oklahoma County is directly attributed to COVID-19 outbreaks at three long-term care facilities.

"We've expected outbreaks to occur in nursing facilities, and have been driving testing and staff resources to these facilities since mid-April as part of Governor Stitt's initiative to test all long-term care residents and staff by the end of May," said Executive Director of the Oklahoma City-County Health Department (OCCHD), Dr. Patrick McGough.

Positive case counts in the general population trend up and down dependent upon lab capacity, and the frequency of the lab reporting the results. On some days, hundreds of lab results will be reported in one day, which can drive positive rates up, and another day the labs may have very few results to report, driving case counts down.

Oklahoma is one of the few states that includes long-term care COVID-19 test results in overall case statistics, which do not necessarily reflect the impact of COVID-19 in the general population.

"As our long-term care testing grows, we expect to see increased positive case counts, which is not unique to Oklahoma County," added Dr. McGough. "We are closely watching hospitalization rates as a key indicator of how the virus is spreading in the general population, and so far this month, hospitalization rates continue trending downward, which is a good sign."

OCCHD has a team of 24 individuals currently sampling residents and staff in facilities across Oklahoma County.