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PRESS RELEASE
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NH DHHS Announces Two Negative Test Results for the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

Concord, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) announces that two individuals in New Hampshire with recent travel to Wuhan City, China, have tested negative for the 2019 novel coronavirus. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has confirmed the negative tests and both patients have fully recovered. DHHS will continue to monitor for new suspect cases of this new coronavirus for individuals who develop fever or respiratory symptoms after traveling to the affected areas in China.

“We have not yet identified any individuals infected with this novel coronavirus in New Hampshire, but we continue to work closely with healthcare providers and the CDC to protect the health of our communities,” said New Hampshire State Epidemiologist Dr. Benjamin Chan. “Rapid identification and testing of individuals is critical in preventing the spread of this novel coronavirus. We will continue to work with healthcare providers to monitor for any additional suspect cases that may occur in New Hampshire and test as appropriate based on a person’s symptoms and travel to affected areas in China. The risk to our communities remains low.”

“We are pleased the patients are doing well,” said Governor Chris Sununu. “It is important to note that the State of NH followed all CDC guidelines in assessing these potential cases and had a plan in place to stop the potential spread of this virus. Our state remains vigilant in monitoring any potential cases and are well prepared for any future potential incidents.”

More than 7,000 cases of novel coronavirus have been identified in more than fifteen countries, including the U.S., where the total number of cases remains at five. DHHS has asked New Hampshire healthcare providers to alert DPHS if they identify patients with travel to Hubei Province, China, who become ill with fever or respiratory symptoms within 14 days of travel so that DPHS can help assess risk, assist with testing, and ensure isolation of the ill patients to prevent the potential spread of novel coronavirus.

While the risk of contracting coronavirus remains low in the US, there are protective measures people can take to reduce their risk of illness. While we are still learning how easily this novel coronavirus is spread, most coronavirus of this type are transmitted through the spread of respiratory droplets, and people can take precautions similar to those taken during flu season to prevent the spread of illness: frequent handwashing with soap and water, avoiding close

contact with sick people, staying home if you are sick, covering your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing, and cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs.

Reported symptoms of illness have primarily included fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. There are currently no vaccines available to protect against the novel coronavirus. CDC now recommends avoiding all nonessential travel to China. For the most updated travel recommendations, people planning a trip to China or surrounding areas should check the CDC website for any updated travel restrictions and recommendations. Residents who have recently traveled to Hubei Province, China and are feeling sick should call their health care provider and let them know of their travel and symptoms before presenting to a provider office.

For more information on novel coronavirus, please visit <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/2019-ncov.htm> and <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

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