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Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Health Department to Observe World TB Day – In the Time of a Pandemic

DuPage County— World Tuberculosis (TB) Day is observed every year on March 24 to increase awareness about TB and the actions needed to detect, treat, and prevent this potentially fatal disease. This World TB Day, DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) remains committed to this mission, even as the COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges around the world.

TB is a contagious and potentially life-threatening disease that is transmitted from person-to-person through the air when a person with active TB coughs or sneezes. People with TB are most likely to spread the germs to people they spend time with every day. Many people are infected with TB bacteria but do not have the active disease. These people should be treated to prevent development into active, contagious TB.

Despite being preventable and treatable, TB remains the world's leading infectious disease killer, taking the lives of 1.4 million people in 2019 alone. Two billion people – one-fourth of the world's population – are infected with the TB bacteria, with more than 10 million becoming ill with active TB disease each year. The United States continues to have one of the lowest TB case rates in the world, and in 2019 reported a total of 8,916 cases—its lowest number on record. It is important that the progress made in TB prevention is not reversed by the pandemic.

While the COVID-19 pandemic is changing the way that TB is being diagnosed and may be delaying diagnosis and treatment for many, DCHD has been able to continue to diagnose and treat active TB disease and latent TB infection. DCHD staff continues to monitor all active TB cases in DuPage County through the use of technology, such as scheduling virtual visits. The success achieved in controlling the spread of TB is directly attributable to the efforts of TB controllers at local health departments through testing, treatment, and education.

DCHD offers a TB Clinic to DuPage County residents by appointment only, and no walk-ins are accepted. Services include testing, diagnosis, and treatment of active and latent TB. To schedule an appointment, please call (630) 682-7400 or learn more at www.dupagehealth.org/326/Tuberculosis.

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DUPAGE**

